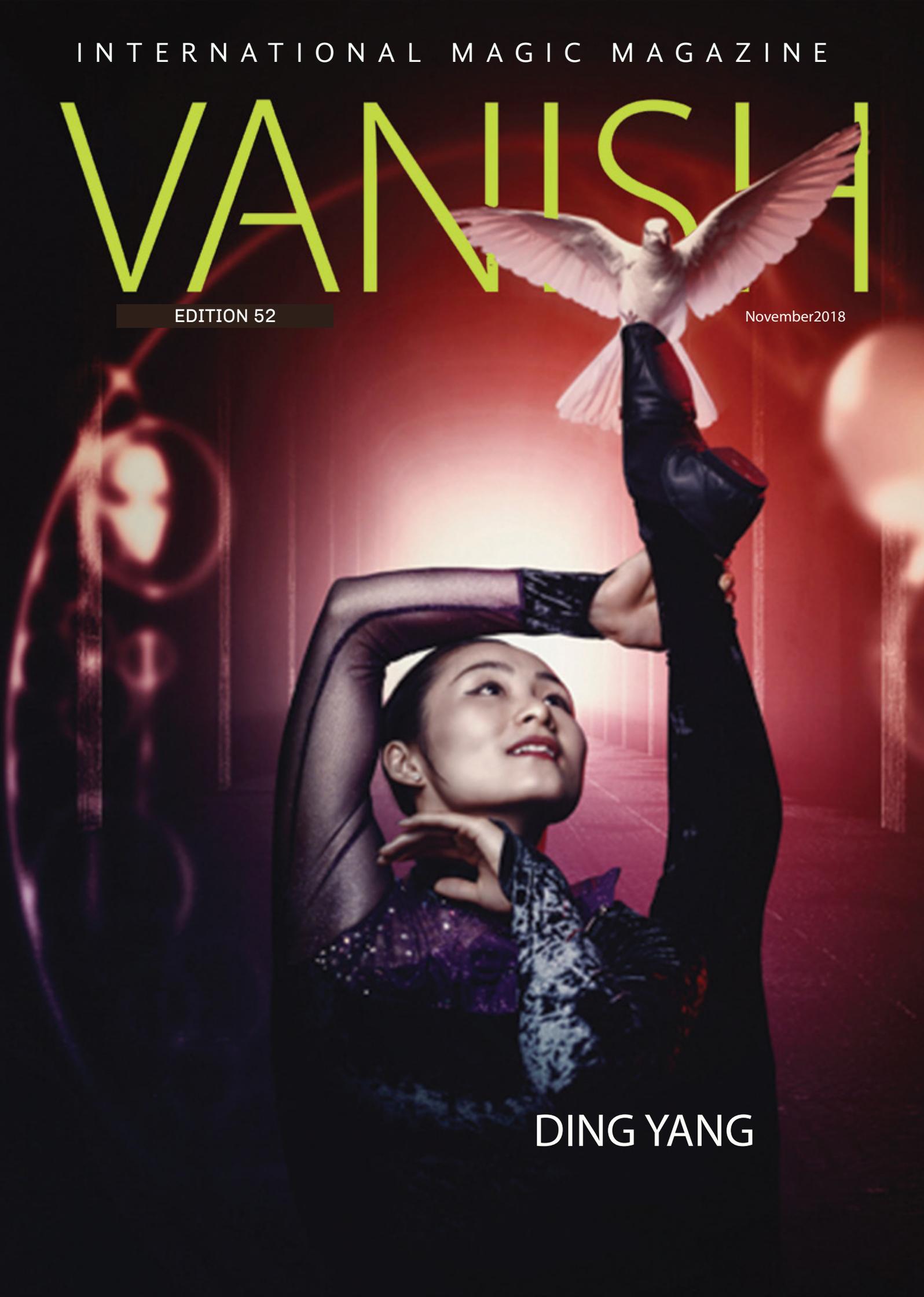


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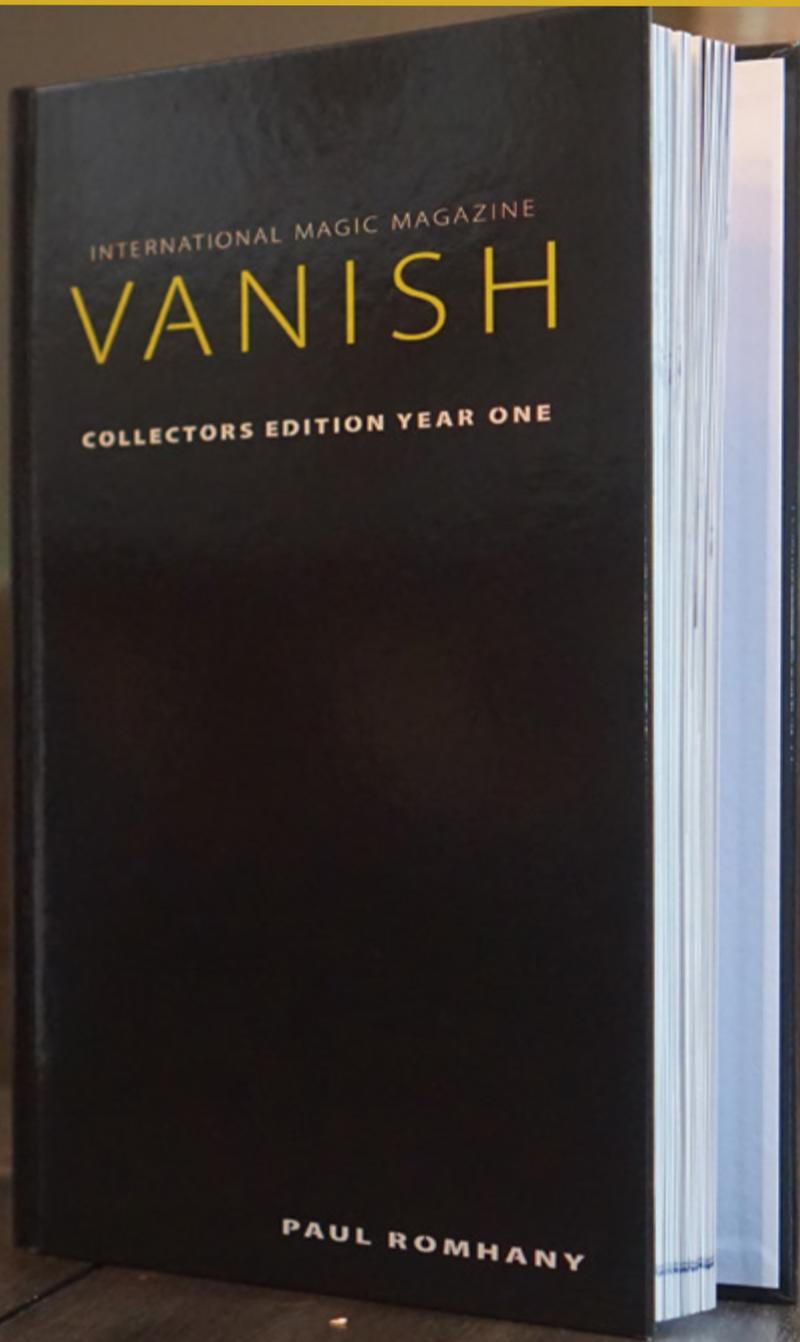
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EDITION 52

November 2018

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NOVEMBER 2018 - Edition 52

VANISH

International Magic Magazine

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FROM THE EDITOR

KEEPING IT CURRENT

One of VANISH magazines strongest attributes, and something I have always taken pride in, is the ability to include current stories and feature artists as breaking news happens. Printed magazines need to be mapped out months in advance, sent to the printers, then mailed to the subscribers, whereas ... VANISH's digital footprint allows us to get the freshest stories, we can make changes the day/night before the magazine comes out, and alert you electronically when it is ready to download and instantly view. Last month was a perfect example, I received a lot of emails congratulating me on featuring Shin Lim as the cover two days after winning AGT, which is why any type of online magazine will always be popular and attract a wide readership. Stay tuned because our December edition will also feature somebody who - days prior - will have had their own TV show aired around the world. Can you guess who??

Another example is this months feature with Din Yang. Ding made her first US appearance at Magic Live in August and the very next day the magic world was abuzz about her performance. I immediately contacted the two people who mentored her, Juliana Chen and Greg Frewin, and set up an interview. It is a remarkable success story and I'm delighted to share it with readers of VANISH.

Nick Lewin has again pulled out all the stops bringing us an excellent piece on Kenton Knepper. I've been a fan of Kenton's for years, studied many of his books and followed his advice. Kenton's influence on magicians and mentalists around the world is prodigious and it's a great honor to have his story in our pages.

Finally, a big thank you to my wife Natalie who organized a family trip to the UK so I could share my 50th Birthday with my twin brother. It was a huge surprise for him as he had no idea we were coming to visit. The look on his face was priceless. There is nothing more magical than having an identical twin, it's an incredible bond I believe only twins can share.

Enjoy this edition of VANISH and as always please support our advertisers - without them this magazine would not be free.

Paul Romhany

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PAUL DANIELS ILLUSIONS SAVED

Chris Cross the Magician, a Lifelong Paul Daniels Fan embarked on a 740 mile round-trip to Wales from Newcastle-Upon-Tyne earlier this week, to salvage some of Paul Daniels's most famous TV tricks...

Chris Cross the Magician, 29, from Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, heard on the grapevine that some magic tricks, that had once belonged to Master Magician, Paul Daniels, were being stored in a farmer's barn in Wales, slowly slipping into a state of dis-repair. After making appropriate arrangements, Cross travelled down to see what was there earlier this week and came home with a van full of what can be only described as Magical History...

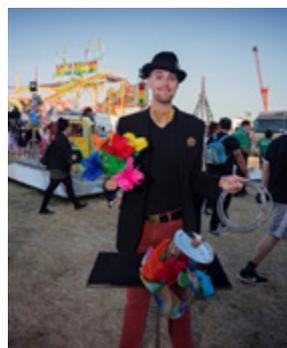
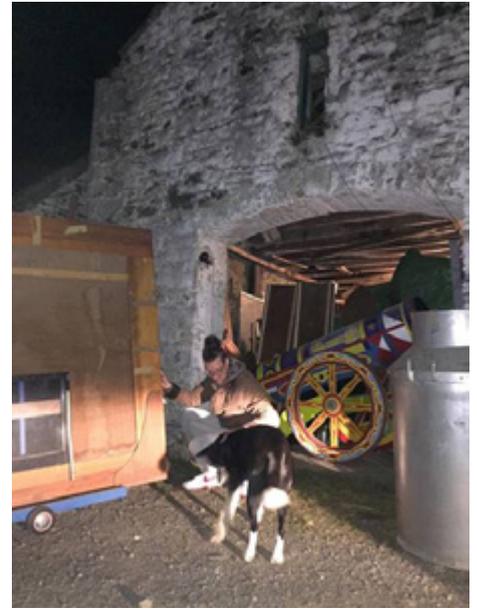
Chris has performed Worldwide for thousands of audiences for over 15 years. He's performed from New York City to New Zealand, Bahrain to Dubai, London to Paris and lots of places in-between. He has notably Performed for The British Monarchy on Numerous occasions & The Prince of Bahrain at The Bahrain International Circuit Formula One too.

Chris Cross the Magician said:

"I didn't quite know what I'd find when I got there, but I was hoping for the best. When we finally arrived at the barn, I was certainly not disappointed. I rolled the dice and it paid off. The journey was well worth making, when I discovered some historically important magical apparatus that did, in fact, once belong to the Legendary Mr. Paul Daniels. He performed the tricks both on his TV show and a few of them in his touring show, too. Perhaps my favourite trick found was the 'Girl through Glass' illusion, that he performed on The Paul Daniels Magic Show, where he pushed Penelope Keith through a solid sheet of glass. I got that one, plus a bunch of others.

We didn't finish loading up the van til around 2am, so we stayed over in a local B&B for the night, before bringing home our treasure to the North-East, which is where Paul Daniels was actually born and raised! I'm so pleased I found these tricks – and just in time I'd say! They were covered with dust and dirt and spiders webs! Thankfully the barn was dry and there was dust sheets over most of the props. However there's flakey paintwork and some deterioration – though with a bit of TLC and some work on them, they'll be back on stage again soon and hopefully on display for the public to see, too! I've got them back to the North-East, now the real work starts on bringing them back to life. I'm only pleased they didn't sit there rotting away for another 20 years."

Paul's Widow, Former Assistant & Strictly Star, Debbie McGee has sent her blessing to Chris Cross, with full permission to perform Paul's illusions.



THE YOUNG MAGICIAN OF THE YEAR 2019



This will take place at The Magic Circle Headquarters in Euston early next year. Heats will take place on Sunday 24th February 2019 with the Final on Sunday 7th April 2019. The closing date is 8th January 2019. Part of The Magic Circle's Youth Initiative, the competition, which is held every other year, attracts entries from some of the finest young magicians in the



country, competing for what many regard as the best prize in British magic: the title 'The Magic Circle Young Magician of the Year', four years free membership of The Magic Circle (on reaching their eighteenth birthday), a trip to the McBride Magic & Mystery School and the award itself, the Derrick Speight Trophy. Recent winners include Ben Hart, Paul Dabek, Steve Dela,

Michael Jordan, Ben Proos, Sebastian Walton, Leah Mae Devine and current holder Dean Leavy. Further information may be obtained from the Competition Secretary, Dr. Michael Colley (michaelcolley@themagiccircle.co.uk).

Application form: <https://themagiccircle.co.uk/news/1318-the-young-magician-of-the-year-competition-2019>

PHOTOS: Past winners Dean Leavy and Paul Dabek.

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Illusionist: Peter Gossamer

Literary: Samuel Patrick Smith

Youth Award: Ryan Lally

Lifetime Achievement Award: James Rainho

Ambassador of Magic Award: Jimmy Brown



The Winners!

L to R: Bill Smith, James Rainho, Jimmy Brown, William Rauscher (Chairman), Ryan Lally, James Mapes, Sammy Smith, Peter Gossamer

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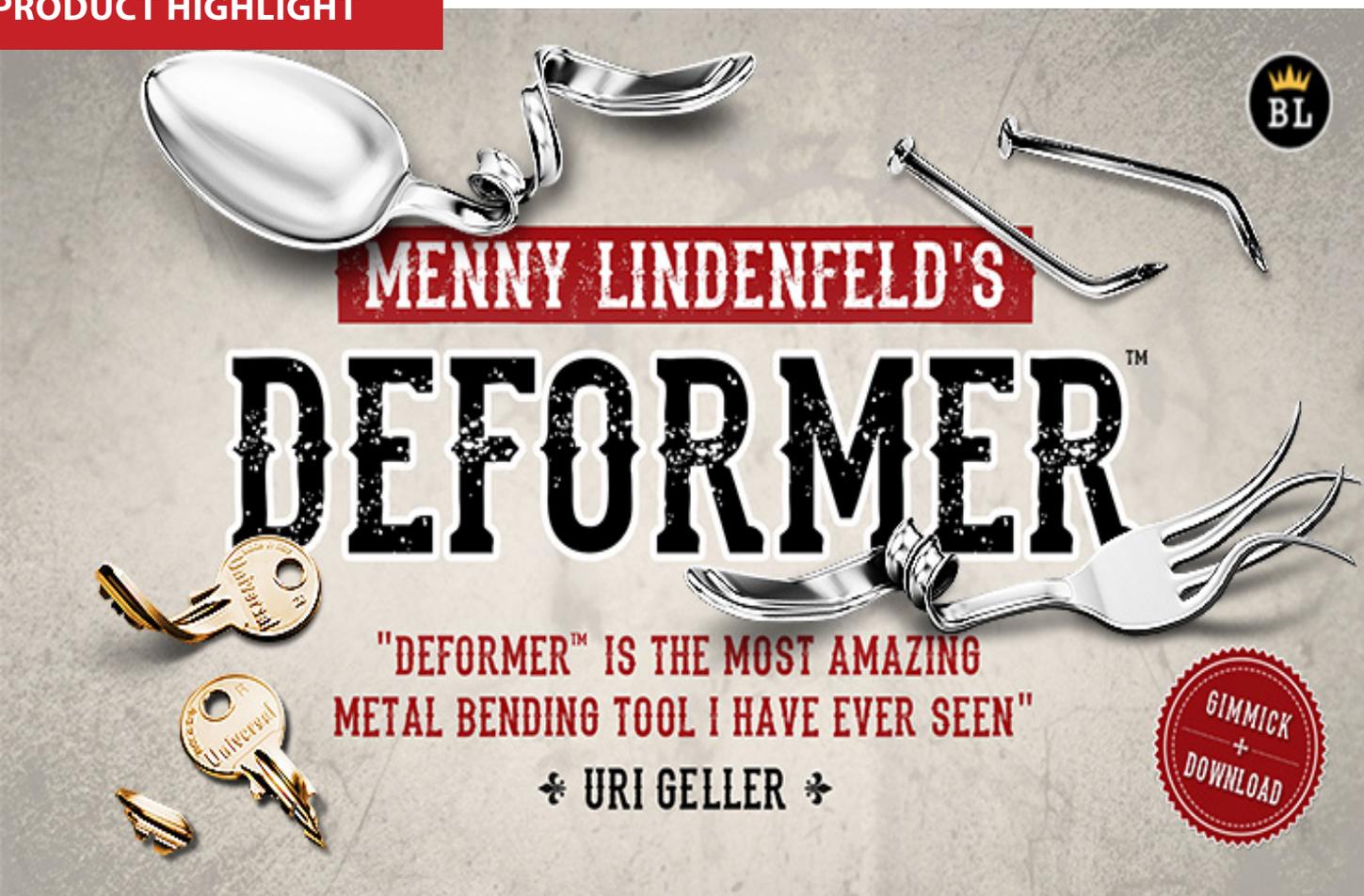
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bend 90° to all directions; upwards, downwards or sideways.
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To bend a perfectly straight spiral twist into the neck of a signed spoon.
To bend multi spirals in a single spoon.
To bend a spiral twist into the tine of a borrowed signed fork.
To bend the tines of a borrowed signed fork into a 90° angle (all directions).
To bend the tines of a fork into an arc shape.
To create a double bend in a single tine ("S" shape).
To bend two tines simultaneously (double tine bend).
To prepare a fork, during a live show, for a tine break (x2 methods).
To create an arc shaped bend + tine twist + preparation for a break - in one continuous motion (This prepares the fork for a 3 phase routine; Bending, Twisting & Breaking).
To bend the lower tip of the handle of both a fork & a spoon.
To bend strong steel nails to a 20°-120° angle.

To bend a signed key into an arc shape.
 To twist a signed key into a corkscrew shape.
 To break a signed key in half.
 Performance methods for bending; spoons / forks / nails / keys.
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MY THOUGHTS:

I don't recall any tool previously that has allowed for so many bends and twists in such a variety of objects. I was fortunate to have a private lesson with Menny on Deformer and the more he showed me the more my mouth dropped. What really makes this so special is the way it is cleverly hidden in something we use every day and is right out in the open. There is absolutely NOTHING for the spectator to suspect and Menny shares his handling in the in depth tutorial. This gimmick actually gives you multiple ways to twist and bend objects so depending on how you want to twist something will depend on how you handle the tool.

Personally, for me the best thing about this is how easy it is to give an object that extra twist. In the past you had to rely on brute force to do some of the twists DEFORMER allows you to do. This really is where this shines. You can bend keys, give impossible twists in a fork and create the coolest bends and twists in a spoon without having eat spinach and turn in to Popeye!

My suggestion is to buy bags of nails, spoons, forks and keys and just sit there while watching TV and bending them all. It is so much fun you will want to get it out of your system. This is something you can carry with you DAILY because chances are you carry a regular one of these anyway.

You can do this for TV, stage, close-up, actually ANY condition you can think of. That's the beauty of this gimmick - it allows for so many possibilities under so many different conditions.

One of the most important parts of this tool is the material it is made from. Menny never releases anything without testing it under every condition you can imagine. It would surprise me if he didn't run it over with a truck to make sure it would not break. This little beauty is made from some really tough material and having worked this now for two months I see no wear and tear on it. It's designed to do a job and do it well.

The Key bend is one of my favorites and personally I've been using this in conjunction with an idea released by Andrew Gerard. I'm using this to bend the key and then perform Andrew's routine by giving the spectator a novel souvenir.

WHERE: Any condition from close-up to stage

WHO: Anybody who can do a bend of any object could use this from beginners to the experienced pro. You don't need any prior experience in bending however it works best in conjunction with other bends.



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STIR CRAZY

BY GREGORY WILSON & DAVID GRIPENWALDT



EFFECT: You cleverly balanced one coffee stir stick on top of the other in a gravity defying way.

REQUIREMENTS: You need two wooden Starbucks coffee stir sticks and a small pocketknife or similar cutting instrument. If you have super strong badger-like fingernails, you can prepare the stick MacGyver style.

PREPARATION: Take one of the sticks and hold it by one of its ends in your left hand. Then, using the knife blade, make a very narrow cut at the right side of the other end. Then slice the blade downward slowly and precisely so that you create a tiny "sliver" about an inch long. This sliver is less than 1/16th of an inch and must remain attached to the stirrer. (Figure 1)



FIGURE 1

The purpose of this "sliver" is to inconspicuously anchor the stick to your upturned right hand during a supposed "balancing feat." Set-up: Hold your right hand palm up with its fingers extended and held together. You must then pinch the loose end of the "secret sliver" between your right second and third fingers near their bases at the second joints. (Figure 2)

Hold the other stick in a similar position in your left hand. Both thumbs are on top of their respective sticks.

METHOD: Say, "Strangely, these sticks can be used to measure your mental balance." Holding each stick by their inner ends, place the outermost end of the (anchored) right stick under the outermost end of the left stick so that it delicately rests on top. The sticks should form a right angle and are almost perpendicular to each other.

If you were not pressing down with your thumbs, the sticks would fall to the floor.

Display the sticks so that the spectator appreciates the situation and understands what would happen if you lifted your thumbs.

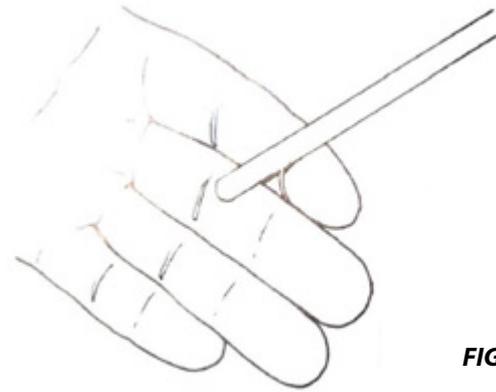


FIGURE 2

Say, "I'll test my mental balance first. There, I seem to be having a good day." Flatten your hands and slowly move your thumbs away. (Figure 3)

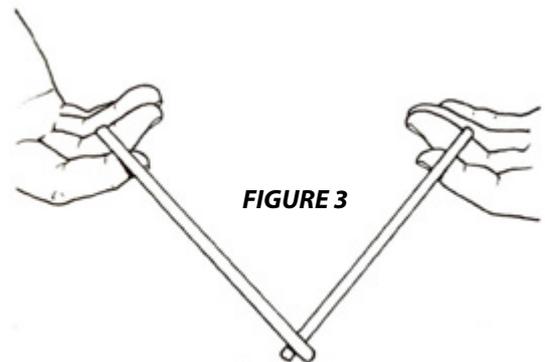


FIGURE 3

Because the right stick is secretly clipped, it will support the weight of the left stick's end, which is delicately bearing down. At this stage you can even gently move both hands up and down.

This looks really impossible!

Hold this pose until the spectator reacts or says something. Then move your thumbs back in place and separate the sticks. It is easy to destroy the evidence. Simply continue to clip the sliver as your other hand pulls the stick away. This will tear off the tiny sliver of wood.

Hand the sticks to the spectator who will no doubt try to duplicate the balancing feat.

LOUIE FOXX DIGITAL CARD TO WALLET



EFFECT: You have a card selected and it's set face down on the table, without having its face seen. You then take out your iPhone and open your Apple Wallet.

Inside your Apple Wallet there is a playing card among the other store cards. You tap the playing card in your digital wallet to show it's the 7 of hearts. They turn their selected card over and it's the 7 of hearts, they match!

You can watch a quick video demo at:

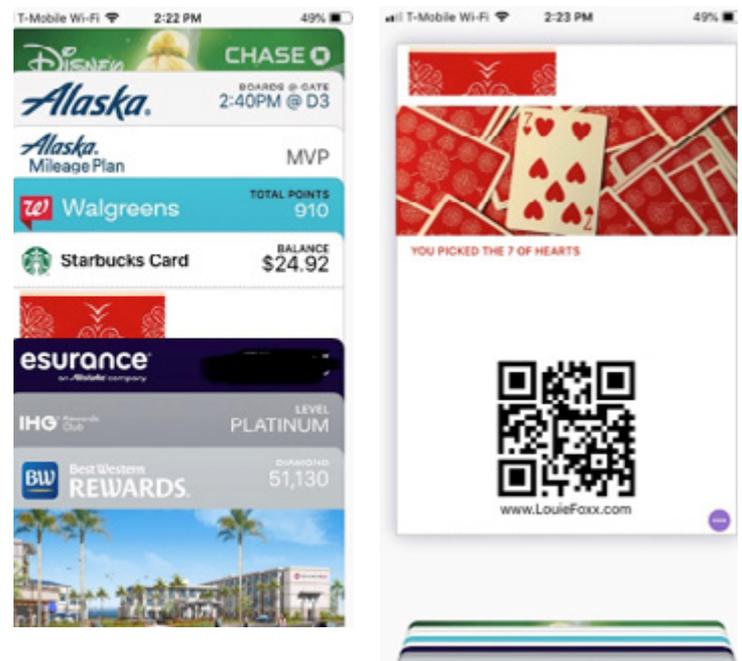


SET UP: You will need to add a custom Apple Wallet card to your iPhone. I do this by using an app called Pass2U which is available in the app store. Once you've added the app, simply create a playing card as an Apple Wallet card. For this example, we will assume you are using the 7 of hearts.

You will also need a deck of cards with the 7 of hearts in a position to force it.

WORKING: Take out the deck of cards and force the 7 of hearts. Personally, I use a classic force, however if you don't do a classic force, any card force will work. After they have taken the card, have them set it on the table without looking at it.

Take out your phone and show them your Apple Wallet. Point out the playing card in the Apple Wallet and open it to reveal their selected card!



The picture on the left shows what the Apple Wallet card look like, and the picture on the right show what they look like after you've tapped on of the Apple Cards.

NOTES: What I love about this trick is that it's a novelty card revelation that always lives in your phone and is ready to go! It's also not limited to cards, you could use it as a revelation for any forced prediction.

I'm sure that there's a similar wallet on Android phones, however I don't have one, but I'm sure you can figure it out using the above as a starting point.

If you want to download the graphics and watch a video tutorial for making the playing card as an Apple Wallet card using the app simply send me a note asking for them via the contact form on my website at www.LouieFoxx.com and I'll email them to you.

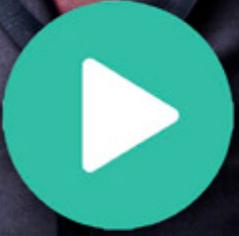
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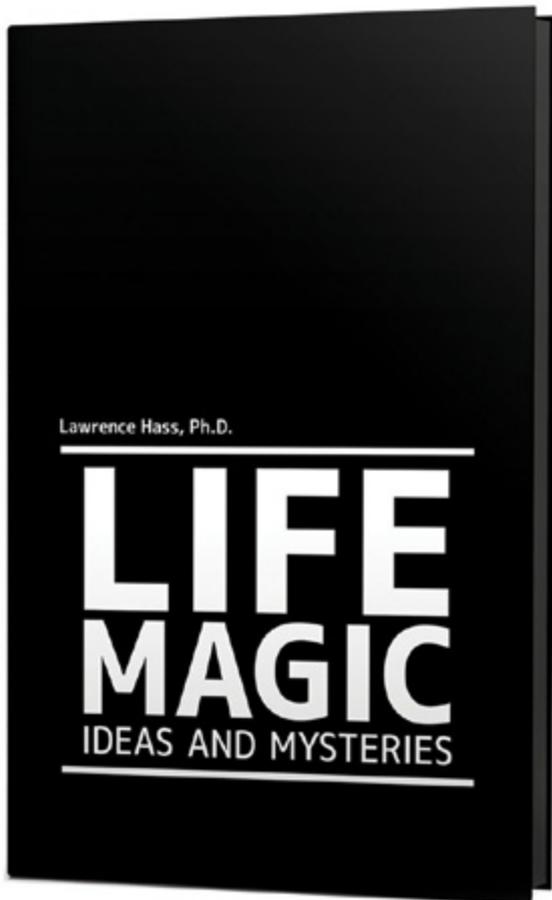
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Chain from RING

Chiam Yu Sheng



EFFECT:

The magician shows a large ring and hands it out to the spectator to examine. After the spectator checks to ensure that the ring is normal, the magician then magically pulls out a chain from the ring!

BACKGROUND:

This is a great opener before performing the classic Ring and Chain magic trick. I was only 14 years old when I first learnt the Ring and Chain routine. I came up with this idea when I saw Shoot Ogawa perform his version of the Purse Frame routine. To me, the ring resembles the purse frame and I think it would be great to pull out the chain from the ring.

METHOD:

Begin by rolling the chain up and keep it in your left Finger Palm position (Fig. 1). Hand the ring to the spectator and have them examine it. Once they are done inspecting the ring, explain to them that this is a special ring and you store something interesting inside the ring. Take the ring back and hold it with your left first finger and thumb (Fig. 2).



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

Extend your right first finger and thumb as your right hand approach the ring. The right thumb and finger goes into the ring and contacts the chain that is in finger palm (Fig. 3). Once you've touched the chain, start pulling the chain out slowly (Fig. 4).



Fig. 3



Fig. 4

If you do this well, it will look as though you are magically pulling a chain out from a normal ring (Fig. 5). Once you have pulled the chain out, hand both the ring and chain out for inspection (Fig. 6). You can then perform the classic routine using the ring and chain.



Fig. 6



Fig. 5

THOUGHTS:

This is a nice interlude when performing the Ring and Chain routine. Another idea that you can do is to palm the ring in your right hand and produce it from behind the spectator's ear just like how magicians produce coins from someone's ear. Once you produce the ring, perform Chain from Ring and it will look really magical.

CREDITS:

It is known that the Purse Frame idea originated from Little Johnny Jones. It is published in *The Seven Circles*, Vol. 4 No. 1, October 1932, page 8 under the title 'The Invisible Purse'.



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MENTAL CHOICE

BY JOE SILKIE

Joe Silkie has been a driving force in magic for many years and is recognized as an elegant performer of the classics and the inventive creator behind powerful effects used by many successful magicians. Joe is a co-founder of the Parlor of Mystery in Lindenhurst, New York.

I'm a firm believer in the K.I.S.S. principle when it comes to magic and most other things too. K.I.S.S. Stands for "KEEP IT SIMPLE, STUPID" a phrase coined by aircraft designer Kelly Johnson and was in widespread use by 1970. I like simple, straightforward methods and it does not get simpler than in this trick.

The idea for this trick gets its origins from Mental Choice. The trick with the three different colored cards (red, blue, and yellow) an envelope and a pencil. The three cards are dealt out face up in front of the spectator. They are given a pencil and told to tap each card one at a time with the pencil and to keep doing this until they feel they should stop and a card is selected. The performer shows a prediction that matches the chosen card. There are three different predictions. On the back of the red card, it says, "YOU WILL SELECT THE RED." In the envelope, there is a card that reads, "YOU WILL SELECT BLUE." On the pencil, "YOU WILL SELECT YELLOW" is printed. Three cards, three outs, this is a classic in magic.

The other inspiration comes from many effects that use the idea of having a double-sided card. That is the secret to MENTAL CHOICE 2000, a great trick and an easy do-it-yourself project.

THE EFFECT:

You show three 2" x 3.5" cards. Each has a 1-inch diameter different colored circle (blue, red, and yellow) in the center. The cards are placed into separate #3 coin envelope. The envelopes are mixed by the spectator and spread in a row. The performer introduces a small black drawstring bag and states that there is a poker chip inside the bag the color of which matches ONE of the cards. The spectator is asked to place the bag on top of one of the envelopes. The performer opens the bag and the selected envelope and they match.

YOU WILL NEED:

- Three blank business cards
- Three #3 coin envelopes
- One set of Avery round color coding labels (Alternative: hand color or print colored circles with your computer printer.)
- One red poker chip.
- One small drawstring bag to fit poker chip.

Constructing and Setup:

In the center of each of the blank business cards place a different color dot, red, blue and yellow. Turn over the blue and yellow

cards and place a red dot on the center of both. That will yield one card with a red dot on one side that is blank on the back, one card with a blue dot on one side and a red dot on the other, and one card with a yellow dot on one side and a red dot on the back. Stack the three cards with the red dot/blank back card on the bottom with the red dot face up and the blue and yellow dot cards on top with the blue and yellow dots facing up. Turn the stack over so that the blank back is topmost.

Place all three of the cards in one of the envelopes, with the blank back on top. Place the two empty envelopes below that envelope. Place the red poker chip in the bag.

PERFORMANCE:

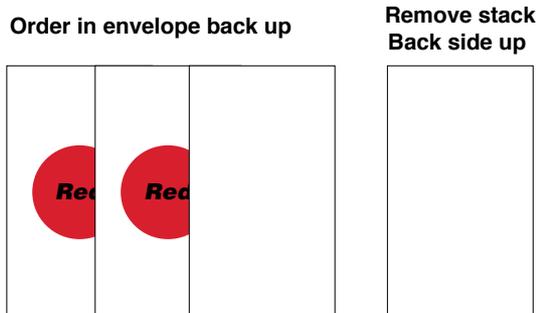
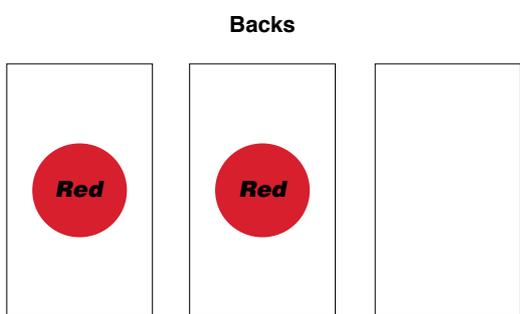
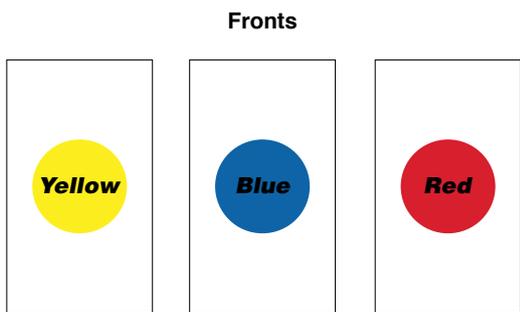
Open the envelope with the dot cards and remove all three with the blank side up. Turn the stack over and deal the spot cards on to the table. This gives the impression that all three cards have a blank back and a spot on the front. It's not necessary to do a Frustration Count to show the backs are all blank. That's overselling it. Remember K.I.S.S.

Place each card in an envelope being sure to put them into the envelopes with the seam side up and close the envelopes. Hand the envelopes to the spectator and ask him to give them a mix. Take the envelopes back making sure the smooth side is facing up and arrange them in a row on the table. Hand the spectator the drawstring bag and let him know about there being a poker chip inside that matches one of the colored dots on the cards. Ask him to place the bag on the envelope of his choice. I like to ask him to say what color he thinks the chip is. Have him open the bag and take out the chip. If he says red make a big deal about him being correct. If he is wrong, say, "See this mind reading stuff is harder then it looks."

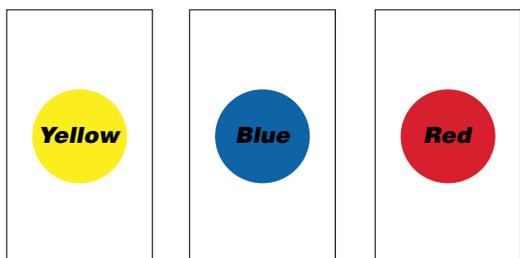
All that's left is to open the envelope and remove the card showing that the color matches the chip and congratulate them on their choice. If they pick the card with the blank back, turn it over the card to reveal the red dot. Otherwise, the cards will come out of the envelope with the red dot facing up.

I think you will find this a rewarding and straightforward trick and enjoy performing it.

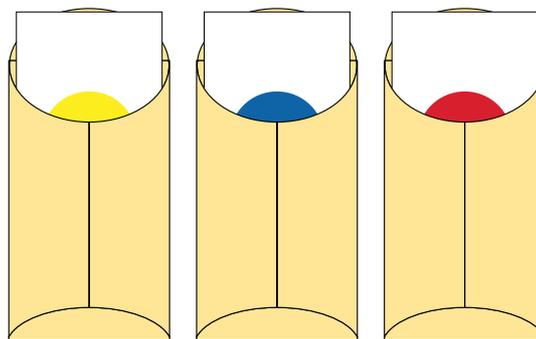




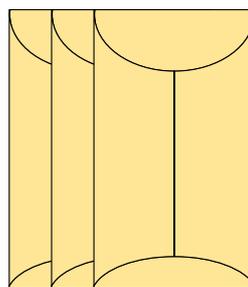
Turn over stack and show 3 different colored cards



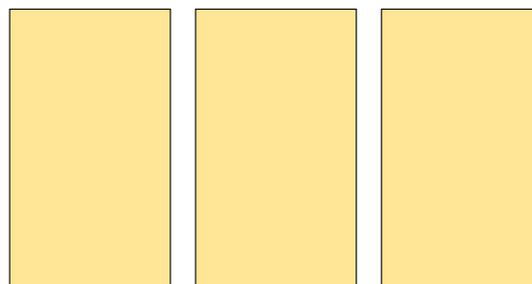
Place cards in envelope front side up



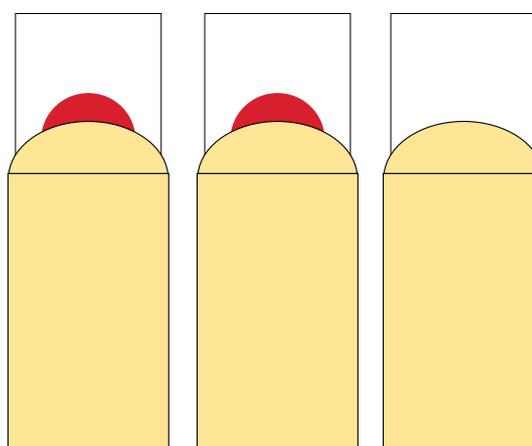
**Close envelopes and shuffle them
Give the envelopes the spectator to shuffle**



Deal envelopes face up on table



**Slide out card from any selected
Envelope will be the run card.
If the card is blank it is the true red card
So just turn it over.**





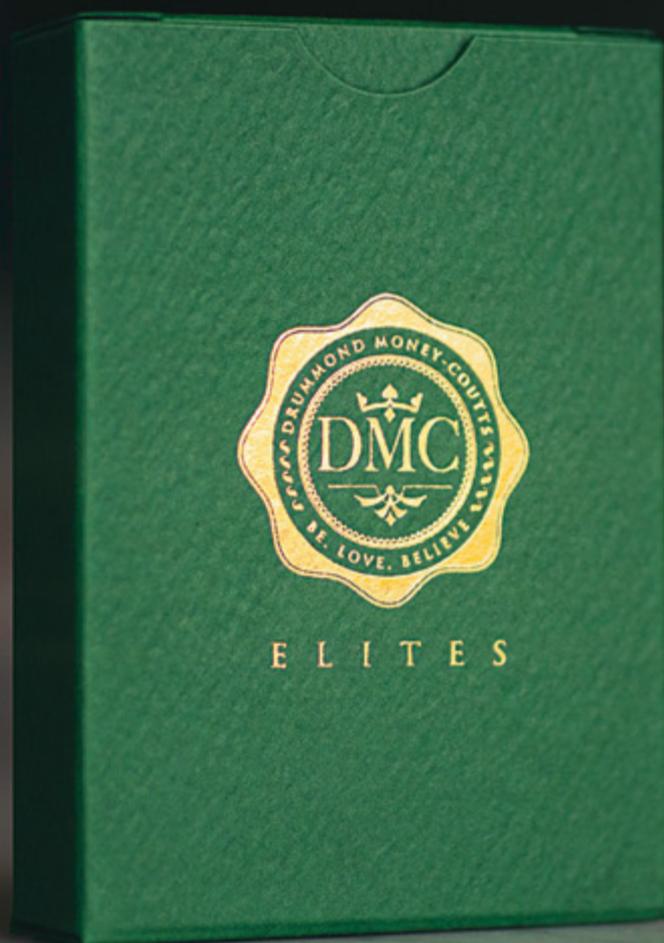
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PHOTOS BY
KARI HENDLER & ARTO AIRAKSINEN
from MAGICLIVE





DING YANG A MAGIC STAR

DING YANG RECENTLY BURST ON TO THE MAGIC SCENE AT MAGIC LIVE - HOWEVER IT WAS A LONG AND HARD JOURNEY.

At Magic Live 2018 the highlight for many people was witnessing a young Chinese artist - Ding Yang, she blew people's minds with never before seen productions of birds at her feet while doing a handstand. Word spread quickly and even David Copperfield and Criss Angel wanted to meet her. She took everybody by surprise, nobody had heard of or knew anything about her.

The background story to Ding's act is extremely interesting and VANISH was able to get an exclusive inter-view with her

mentors/coaches Juliana Chen and Greg Frewin. Both are FISM award winning acts with years of experience, they are considered two of the best magic entertainers in the world.

Prior to magic Ding started circus skill training at a young age, becoming a contortionist in Chinese circus. She began performing magic in 2009, her Chinese teacher based her study of magic on a more traditional Chinese style. In her first dove act Ding produced 18 birds which she performed on French TV.

In 2016 Juliana first saw Ding Yang perform in Shanghai and she recognised her potential, and knew that with help from a mentor and teacher she could go far. It brought back memories of her own start in magic for Ju-liana as she also grew up in the Chinese Circus world as an acrobat before changing to magic. Juliana then contacted the director of the Circus and got things moving.

One thing was very clear for Juliana, she wanted Ding to use less bird and NOT wear a tuxedo.

The idea and plan were to get ready for FISM. As they began Juliana realized time was against them for the current FISM and also knew she needed to find a coach who had experience with birds and a modern approach to the craft.

The first person who came to mind was Greg Frewin. In March 2018 Ding Yang flew to Niagara Falls, Canada to start training with Greg who has his own theatre. In the five month period Greg took everything apart start-ing from scratch ... including her technique, costume and overall image. The choice was made to NOT have her look like a dove magician. He wanted to create something brand new. As it turned out Greg had been developing bird productions without any jacket, just a shirt, so he was able to take what he'd already devel-oped and modify it for Ding's new routine. Then when Greg discovered she was an incredibly talented acro-bat he realized he could take the act even further, developing new concepts such as producing doves from her feet ... which had never been done.

PHOTO BY
KARI HENDLER
from MAGICLIVE



For the first month Greg had Ding working with rubber doves, eventually moving to real birds. While she had used doves prior he wanted to make sure her technique was flawless. After months of planning and rehearsals Greg got her act from 18 birds down to 8.

There were many obstacles in the way, from language to culture, but Greg persevered because he saw the fire in Ding and her willingness to be the best she can be. Sometimes what may have taken at most 10 minutes to explain turned into an hour trying to convey. However, Greg said over a period

of months communication got better as they discovered each others nuances and personalities, and eventually they almost started to think alike.

Juliana interjected that times she felt like a mother ... when Ding got upset with Greg she would phone Juliana, and when



PHOTO:
Ding rehearsing with Greg Frewin



PHOTO: Greg and Juliana



Greg got perturbed with Ding he would call Juliana too. By the end, Juliana said they became a family.

Once Greg had worked out the technical details Juliana flew to Niagara Falls, to Greg's theatre, to coach Ding on choreography and music. When the act was ready Ding performed it in Greg's theatre show for ten days to get the audience's reaction and make alterations.



Both Greg and Juliana feel Dings routine brings a “bird act” to the next level, and after two standing ovations at Magic Live, they realized all the hard work had paid off. On the second day of Magic Live Stan asked Juli-ana to give a talk about Ding Yang because everybody wanted to know who this young girl was from the night before.

Side note - Ding:

There is a funny story about Dings ability to push herself and not give up. When Greg and Ding were working on the bird from feet they originally wanted to do a split production - they tried once and it didn't work so they practiced with a single bird. It still wasn't working so Greg suggested she not do it, however, Ding was determined and spent time working on the double without telling Greg. A short while later Greg asked her what she was doing and she told him. Greg said that if she could do it and it was good they would keep it in. As he sat there Ding presented her split production of birds from her feet ... and it worked ... the rest is history!

Side note 1 - Juliana:

Part of Juliana's thinking was and is to help change the mind of many Chinese magicians to not copy acts they see, but try to create something original. Ding is Vice-President of a magic company and so by helping her Juliana will also help change the minds of many Chinese magicians.

Side note 2 - Juliana:

I asked Juliana her advice to magic acts since she is a FISM judge. Juliana reminded me that technique is 20 points, and the act - movement and personality - is also equal to 20 points. So in Ding's case she produces eight birds, which could be done in a minute, however, it's everything else that goes in to the performance from communicating to the audience, movement, etc., all equally important.

Side note 1 - Greg:

When speaking to Greg I asked him how it felt being behind the scenes, coaching. He said he's at a good place in his career and confident to be on the other side of the stage. He felt like a proud father when Ding was performing at Magic Live receiving the applause they'd all worked so hard on getting.

“
**JULIANA WANTS TO HELP CHANGE THE MIND
OF MANY CHINESE MAGICIANS TO NOT COPY
ACTS THEY SEE, BUT TRY TO CREATE SOMETHING
ORIGINAL.**



PHOTO:
Ding and her son during rehearsal



PHOTO
Juliana and Ding Yang

Side note 2 - Greg:

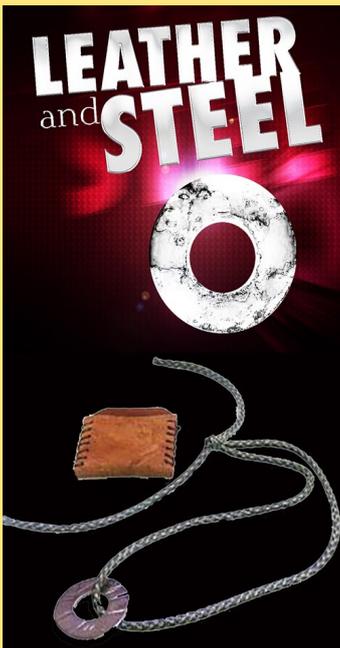
Then I asked Greg if he would coach another act, he said if the right person came along he would. With this project he didn't want to have more invested than the person he was teaching because if he cares more about the act than they do he has other things he'd rather be doing.

Conclusion:

Without any doubt Ding Yang will be a name we will all hear about and see more of in the very near future. With the continued guidance of Juliana and the time spent with Greg she now has the world 'at her feet,' so to speak. Her success is also a great example of two extraordinary performers taking time out of their hectic lives to help another. From a little village in China to the bright lights of Las Vegas, Ding Yang is pushing magic forward in a way we haven't seen in a very long time.



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This creation by Chicago magician Al Bach was a hot seller at the 2017 Genii convention, it is an easy to do, amazing looking penetration of a solid steel disc onto a strong cord. It looks amazing in person, right under the spectators' eyes.

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SAY TO ALL MAGICIANS AND
MENTALISTS - AND WE ALL NEED
TO LISTEN!

By **NICK LEWIN**

I have been a fan of Kenton Knepper for some time. Like many other magicians, my first real exposure to him was with the release of his groundbreaking effect *Kolossal Killer*. Later when I met him and saw him perform at one of Michael Finney's *Dry Heat Golf Classic* the deal was sealed and I became a "Kolossal" fan of not only his magic, but also the man himself. One of the joys of writing freelance for *Vanish Magazine* is the freedom to choose my own topics to write about, and when I recently read Kenton's remarks about the impact of YouTube on learning in his blog, I made a mental note that this was a topic that I wanted to pursue in an article.

Some of his words that made such an impact on me, and indeed mirrored many of my own feelings, were "Some names in mentalism and magic are exposing things on YouTube as click bait and yet we are not paying the real creators or innovators. We pay copycats, people uneducated in mentalism and magic history, and con artists, not true originators or innovators. We pay for the sizzle. It doesn't seem to matter to customers that there is no meat in what they buy. You are buying stuff that cannot be performed in real life situations. Everyone can learn tricks for free. Even if you bought a trick and learned it,



anyone else can do the same. Buying a trick doesn't make you a mentalist or a magician any more than buying a piano makes you a musician."

I thought these were very valid points in this day and age, and Knepper went on to say, "You are being tricked into thinking that learning a trick is real learning. The real secrets are taught from masters to students over a period of time. These real secrets cannot be easily exposed. What you actually pay for is your part of the responsibility for making mentalism and magic what it will become. Much of what you are buying from some of the names in mentalism today isn't *theirs* at all."

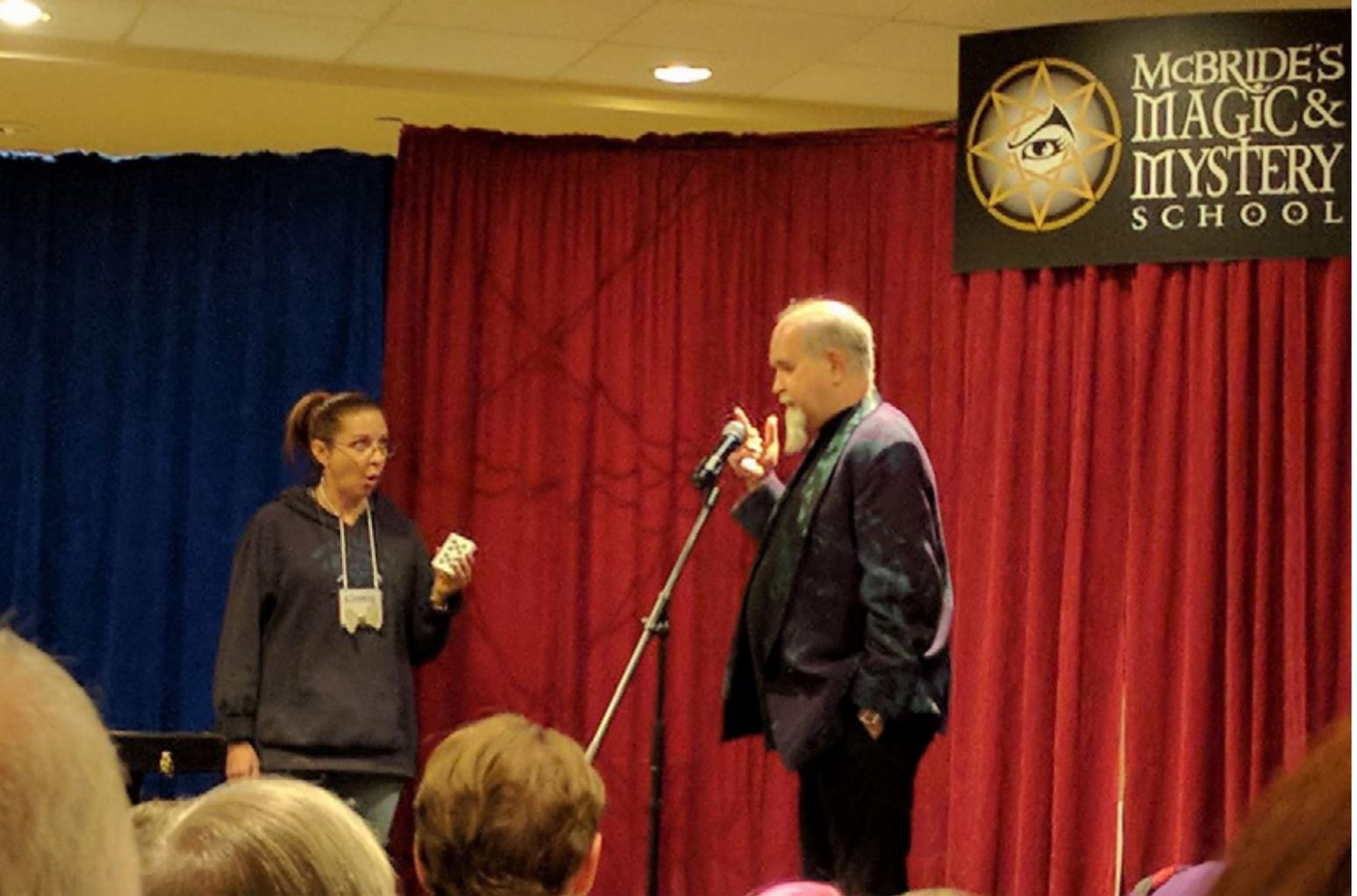
Recently I had to chance to spend some time interviewing Kenton for this story, and I'm looking forward to taking this opportunity to tell you a little more about both the man and his philosophy. Knepper was born in Cedar Rapids, Iowa and began his lifelong love affair with magic when he was being initiated into Cub Scouts. During the event, someone said, "We are having entertainment tonight; we have a

You are being tricked into thinking that learning a trick is real learning.

magician who is going to perform for us." The magician was Mark Edmonds who performed a bunch of tricks including suspending someone in mid-air and after his performance he announced he gave lessons and taught a class at the YMCA on Saturdays. Knepper's parents said, "Would you like to go?" Kenton said; "NO!" Okay, maybe it wasn't quite love at very first sight with magic!

However, Knepper's parents somehow managed to spirit him away to the YMCA the following Saturday where he saw a kid standing in front of the allotted room with two handkerchiefs that changed color. "Suddenly something in my head clicked," says Kenton, "I literally heard it click." Knepper instantly recognized his future path and by the age of eight Edmonds had him present a lecture on the history of magic. That same year he performed his first show at a birthday party. In this manner and at this precociously young age, Kenton began a dual career that would continue to thrive as both a magician and magical educator.

In those early years, Knepper was a vera-



scious reader and worked hard at turning the tricks he discovered in books into actual performance pieces. Says Kenton, "The joy of learning magic from books isn't just the tricks you learn, but the understanding of the art that begins to form in the background of your mind and becomes the foundation of your future." Although Kenton grew up in a relatively small town, he was lucky to find an assortment of magicians living locally who enjoyed a wide range of experience in real world magic, and they acted as teachers to fan the flames of interest in the magical arts that were fast becoming his passion.

I asked Kenton how he felt about the current generations to whom YouTube has become a form of digital mentor and replaced the live model that we older magicians grew up with. "What you gain is immediacy," Knepper responded instantly. "At least you learn how some tricks are done—even wrongly!" You also gain the opportunity to learn from some of the greatest teachers in the world. The downside is that just as often you are learning from someone who doesn't really know, or is holding back information. Many real teachers don't want to teach in such an open forum and tend to hold back certain information. Most people are not really learning; they are just getting tricks." Making this point even clearer Knepper states, "The real secrets are not handed over for free. They cannot be easily exposed. The real secrets of mentalism and magic come drop by drop, not in an instant video. Rare teachers know how to build you up so that you become your own master mentalist or magician, not a mere trickster."

One of Kenton's mentors in the late '70s was close-up giant John Mendoza. Kenton recalls, "To become a student of John's cost ten thousand dollars, even back then, and involved driving about an hour and a half, and staying



Kenton with Stevie Nicks

with him at his house for three days a week—for years." Hearing Kenton talk about his actual training with Mendoza created an immediate parallel of my mentorship with Ken Brooke in the '60s in London. Both men required a great deal of attention to the details they explained to you, then they expected you to fully master what had been taught on your own. Only then would they give you the information you would need in order to move forward. Both men also required substantial payment in addition to your investment in time. In my opinion this adds greatly not only to the way you learn, but what you *do* with the information once you have absorbed it. Information that is given too freely or cheaply can often dissipate as easily as it is acquired.



During these early years, Knepper performed every kind of magic from close up to illusions including a great deal of what he classifies as “pretty magic.” In this manner he was able to learn psychology and theatre, which are two of the things that give such edge to his later specialization in mentalism. Studying at school, psychology and philosophy were a serious part of his itinerary and coupled with a growing interest in the symbolism of magic were ground zero to more metaphysical aspects. Kenton’s mastery of various combinations of trickery, suggestion, hypnosis, and genuine arcane information helps define his unique status in the magic world.

Knepper’s key reading at this junction featured the works of Harlan Tarbell, Ormand McGill, and S. H. Sharp in whom he recognized an inner resonance with the inner

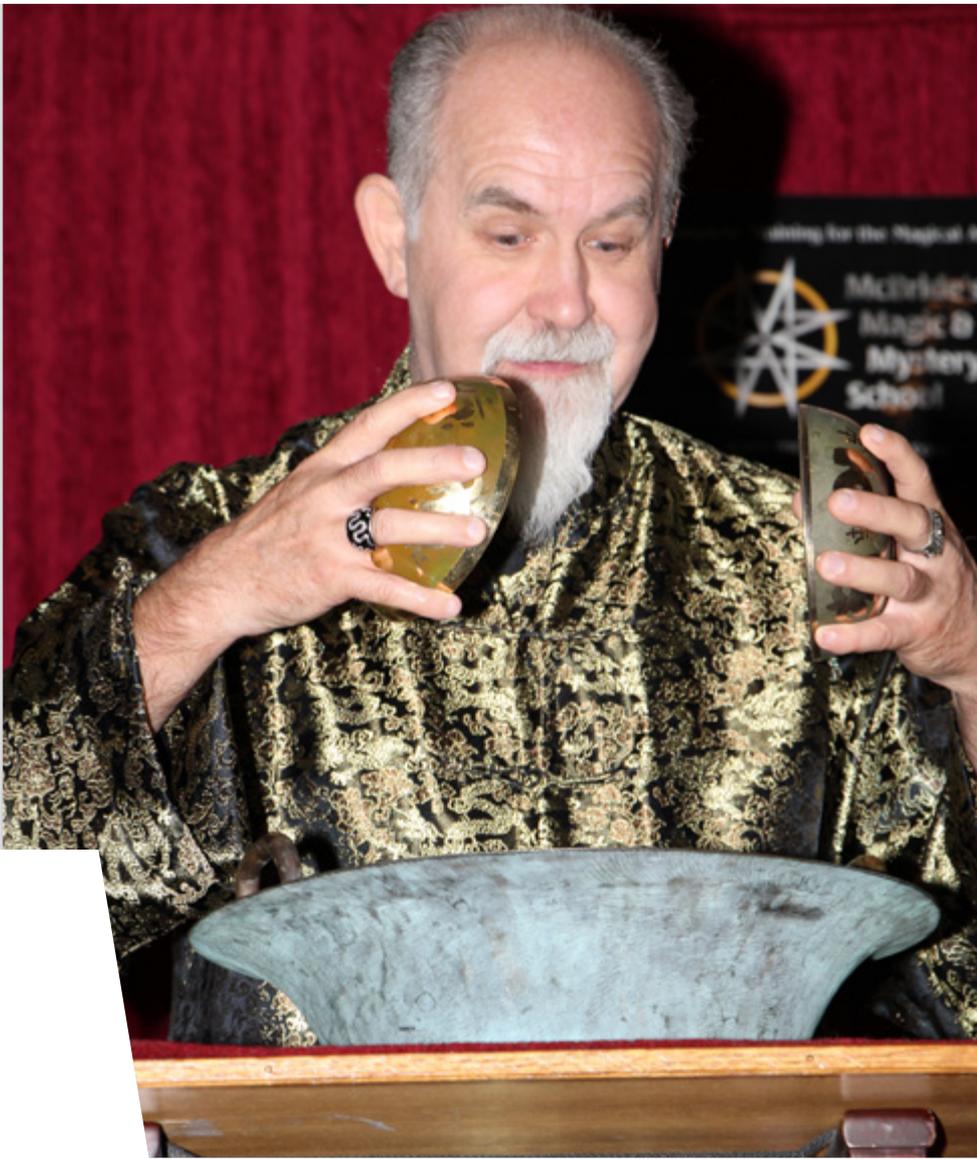
and outer aspects of magic. “If you read between the lines of these men, certainly McGill, they were pretty blatant about esoteric philosophy and the things they were working with and studying such as suggestion and breathing exercises.” All this was to find a significant place in Knepper’s future work.

In 1982 Kenton moved to Phoenix, Arizona and started the next phase of his magical career and he began to morph into the close-up/mentalist/teacher we now know. In the ‘80s there was a great deal of work for magicians in Phoenix and Kenton had the opportunity to really polish his craft. A further turning point was when two local attorneys opened a restaurant/bar called Jame’s Place that specifically featured magic. Many of the other local magicians performed there, but it was Knepper who

effectively became the house magician. During these years Kenton began to focus more exclusively on his close-up work. Although he had featured mentalism in his show throughout his early career, it also began to find a more significant home in his contemporary work. During these years Kenton found a great sponsor for his work with Penn, one of the makers of premiere tennis equipment, and he became the Penn Racquet Ball Magician. This connection resulted in many years of great work. Knepper was certainly keeping busy as a performer, but he definitely hadn’t abandoned his role as a teacher.

Always a fund of creative ideas, Knepper had begun to share his ideas and effects as a lecturer back in Iowa, and this side of his work expanded during the years after he moved to Arizona. He had many individual students, including Peter Turner, Luca Volpe, Pablo Amirá and Fraser Parker that he worked with intensely. I asked Kenton what the focus of his mentoring was with these students and he replied, “I really liked to stress attention to detail and how to become fully developed magicians whose personality was deeply integrated with their performance. It wasn’t just about what they did, but who they were and what they really wanted to represent.” Kenton had also begun marketing some magic in his Iowa days when he released his *Field Pendulum*, however, he probably came to national prominence around 1987 when he released his brilliant and much imitated *Kolossal Killer* routine. Originally known as *Kenton’s Klose Kall*, the diabolical subtlety and versatility of this principle made it an instant classic throughout the magic community.





A great stand alone effect *Kolossal Killer* or any card worker this routine supplied the perfect out

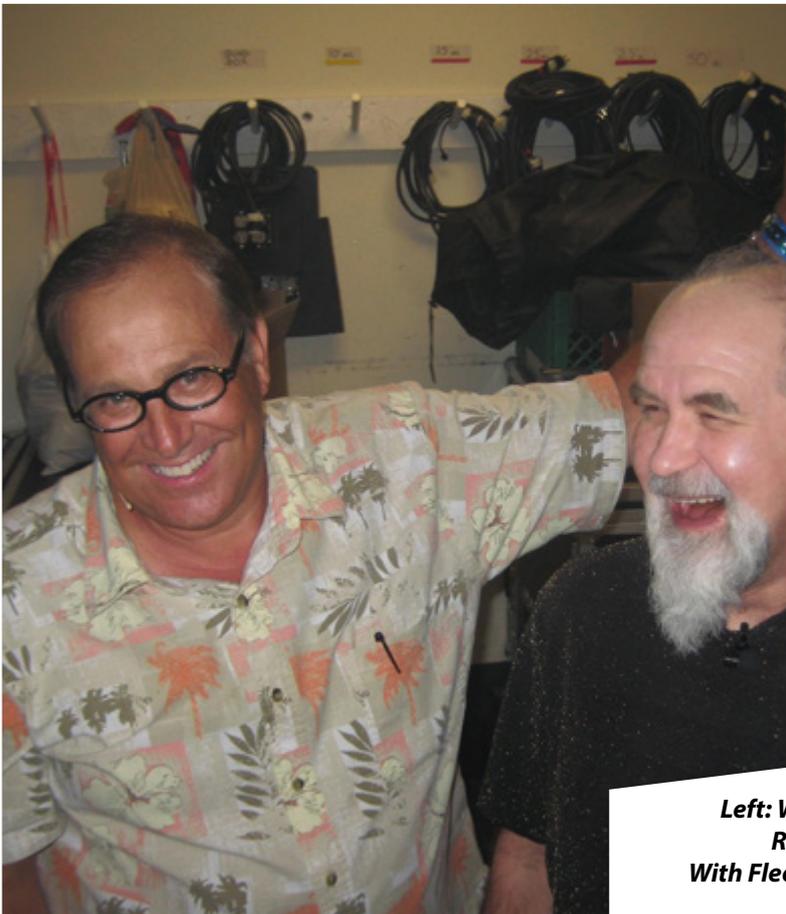
Another of Knepper's innovative ideas that propelled him into even higher visibility was his *Multiple Dual Reality*. This is the concept, which was initially released in a series of audiotapes in 1992 as *Wonder Words*. It was an idea that sowed seeds that are continuing to blossom in the world of mentalism. *Wonder Words* was based on the assumption of the multiple realities that exist in an individual's world and how they interact with each other. For a magician these co-existing realities might include performer, participant, observer etc.

Wonder Words made quite an impact not only in the magic world, but its intrinsic power was recognized on a larger scale when orders started to come in from studio heads and similar figures who desired a new approach to the topics it illuminated. Kenton's friend Jeff McBride was also instrumental in spreading the word about this new idea within the magic world. Like many innovative ideas in magic, *Wonder Words* was not without its critics initially, but it has always been predominate in Knepper's style to court controversy by incorporating paradigm busting elements into his work. In his blending of esoteric with traditional magical disciplines, Kenton was very much in line with the groundbreaking work that McBride and Eugene Burger molded into their *Magic and Mystery School* model. In fact, it was Eugene Burger who helped inspire Kenton to look for a new way to interact with his students rather than fall back on the traditional traveling lecture formula.



“Kenton has devised a system of learning that helps develop every aspect of a student's potential persona and performing skill.”

Knepper has always maintained a steady group of “in person” students, and also communicated very closely with magicians around the world who studied his ideas. Originally this long distance advising was in the form of letters and phone calls. As technology began to change the landscape it was very natural for Kenton to embrace the endless boundaries offered by the new digital landscape. This was when a second big “buzz” occurred around Knepper's work and ideas. In 2006 at Eugene Burger's urging, Kenton started utilizing video more extensively in his teaching and began to offer individual learning sessions and also working with small groups of up to six students on an international basis.



**Left: With Nate
Right:
With Fleetwood Mac**



It became instantly evident that this new dimension of learning was proving very productive with his students.

Knepper's new manner of teaching is as old as the hills and yet as new as the Internet. Kenton has devised a system of learning that helps develop every aspect of a student's potential persona and performing skill. The way Knepper has structured his online courses encourages his students to receive their lessons at the cor-

rect speed for them to best absorb them. Even more importantly, it allows them the opportunity to learn with a consistency that much more clearly mirrors the old-fashioned master/student roles that have always accomplish the optimal levels of learning and growth.

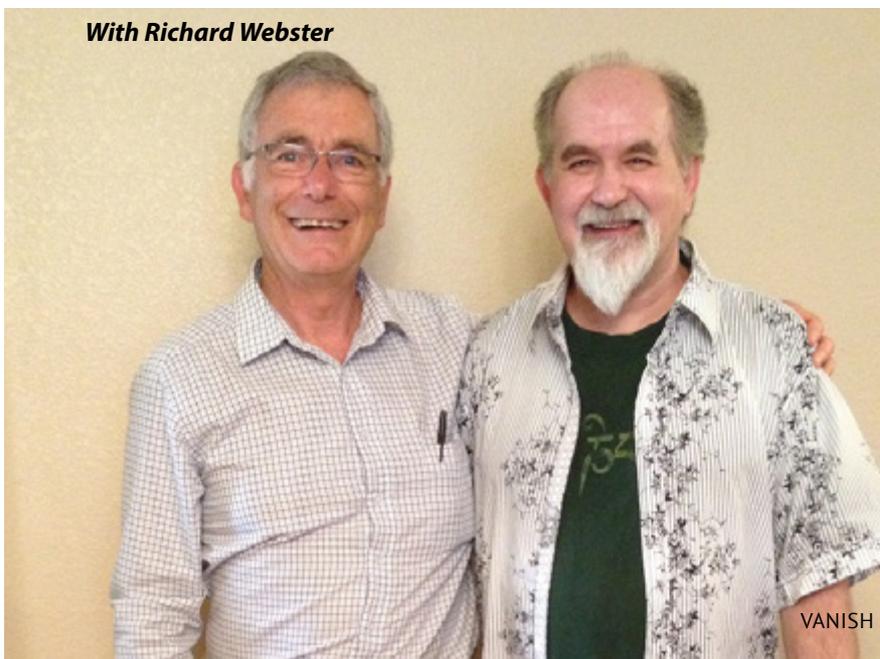
While still presenting lectures and workshops when location and circumstances made it easy and practical, the new vision in Kenton's mind was to offer his informa-

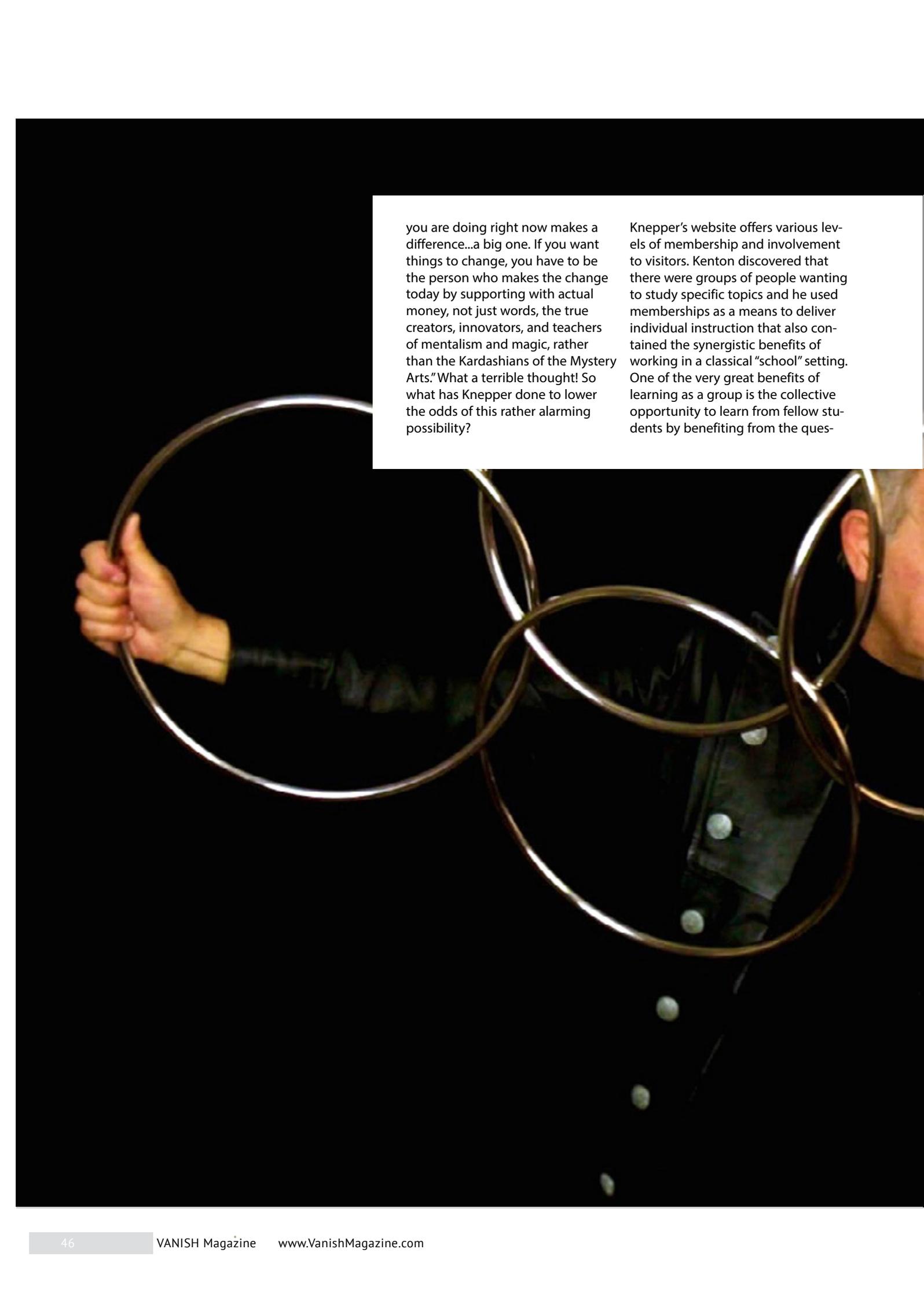
tion as a fully integrated online teaching resource. This would allow students to study and learn in a manner that more closely represented the one-on-one mentorship that he himself had experienced. Knepper's quietly radical form of the online mentorship offered something new and different to his students in its use of modern technology. Along the way he also managed to avoid some of the "YouTube negatives" that were fast becoming noticeable.

"If you want to have a persona of a mentalist or a magician, if you want to live magic and mentalism, then you need to study with a sincere master teacher, not another online trick-of-the-day shop," says Knepper. He adds, "As long as you do not read, refuse to learn anything but tricks, and not know mentalism or magical history at all, you will be scammed by non-creative people into paying them with money, love, attention, and publicity while the originators can't pay to take care of their basic needs. Great actors know that they have to do deep secret work on the inside to make their character on stage or screen seem realistic. Magicians and mentalists right now think all they need is Google and YouTube to be great. They are in for a world of disappointment."

Kenton puts it very succinctly, "Many mentalists and magicians today are like the people who watch *The Kardashians* and click on all the news about them, while complaining about the stupidity of what is on television, like *The Kardashians*. What

With Richard Webster



A person is performing a ring trick with multiple interlocking metal rings. The rings are arranged in a complex, overlapping pattern. The person's hands are visible, holding some of the rings. The background is dark, making the metallic rings stand out.

you are doing right now makes a difference...a big one. If you want things to change, you have to be the person who makes the change today by supporting with actual money, not just words, the true creators, innovators, and teachers of mentalism and magic, rather than the Kardashians of the Mystery Arts." What a terrible thought! So what has Knepper done to lower the odds of this rather alarming possibility?

Knepper's website offers various levels of membership and involvement to visitors. Kenton discovered that there were groups of people wanting to study specific topics and he used memberships as a means to deliver individual instruction that also contained the synergistic benefits of working in a classical "school" setting. One of the very great benefits of learning as a group is the collective opportunity to learn from fellow students by benefiting from the ques-

tions they formulate. The very best way to learn from a teacher is closely related to the level of questions that are answered by him. It might be that a question posed by a student in England is a vital key to the development of a student sitting at his computer in Minnesota.

The magical highway is littered with magicians who firmly believe that all they need is just one more trick to make their act a commercial success. What they probably need more is the

kind of information that Kenton supplies to the ever-increasing band of mentalist/magicians who are taking the opportunity to reap the benefits from this powerful magic resource. Rather than concentrating on tricks, but instead focusing on principles, Knepper fulfills every teacher's ultimate goal and replaces the gift of fish with the ability to use a fishing pole and become self sufficient.

Knepper's website offers a wide range of classes, courses, memberships and

events to inspire visiting magicians into beginning a meaningful pathway to their goals. I strongly recommend that if this style of learning resonates with you, that you visit his site and see the exciting options that are presented there. Never has it been easier or more cost effective to consult with a master of the Magical Arts and learn from his experience. You can find Kenton's website at <http://www.wonderwizards.com>



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SEVEN BAD HABITS TO AVOID AS A MAGICIAN

Jason Ladanye performs world-class sleight of hand for private parties and corporate events all over the world. Jason exposes the underground world of cheating at cards and how to beat Vegas if you have the skills. He has spent a lifetime mastering this skill set and it's an experience your guests will never forget

BY JASON LADANYE

1 Be aware of using technical terms in your patter. I have heard magicians use these actual lines: "I'm not holding any breaks," and "I didn't force that card on you," and "These are real shuffles." Your audience doesn't know what these terms are and you're also educating them on what these things are. "I'm not holding any breaks" will probably just confuse your spectator. However, "I didn't force that card on you" is teaching them that that's something you could do. It'll be hard to convince your spectator that they had a free selection when you have to tell them to take your word that it was a free choice. "These are real shuffles" is implying that the opposite may exist. Each of these examples can be reworded to avoid bringing up methods. Better examples would be: "Your card is lost somewhere in the deck and I couldn't possibly know the exact position," and "You could have selected any card in the deck," and "You can see how thorough this shuffle is, correct?"

2 Avoid constantly shifting weight while performing. I see this one all the time from new performers. Chances are they're not even aware of it. So, if you're reading this blog and you're a beginner, now you'll be more aware of it. It's a huge distraction for your audience and it telegraphs that you're nervous. Imagine trying to watch your favorite movie on a television that rocks back and forth. Distracting, right?

3 Stop winging your patter and saying lot's of "um's," "er's," and unwittingly using word echo's. I've addressed this already in a previous blog. But recently I saw a video from another well-known magician and the patter was all over the place. Let me know what television commercial you saw where the voiceover was filled with um's and er's and the ad copy just rambled on with random words and was filled with repeat info. There's no such thing. Each word was carefully chosen so the listener gets the exact message that was intended every time..

4 Make sure you're not performing in a bubble. While on stage performing for a large audience or even for a small group of people, I've seen magicians only performing for themselves. Their head never comes up. Their eyes are locked on their hands (or whatever prop they're holding). There's no eye contact with any spectators or they never even address any spectators. Those people are gathered around you to watch your magic. Make eye contact with not only the spectator involved in the effect, but also with everyone there. Call people out by their name. This will make for a stronger performance because you'll have a stronger connection with your audience. Pro Tip: Remember your spectator's names. It's never a good thing to ask people their names again after they've told you once.



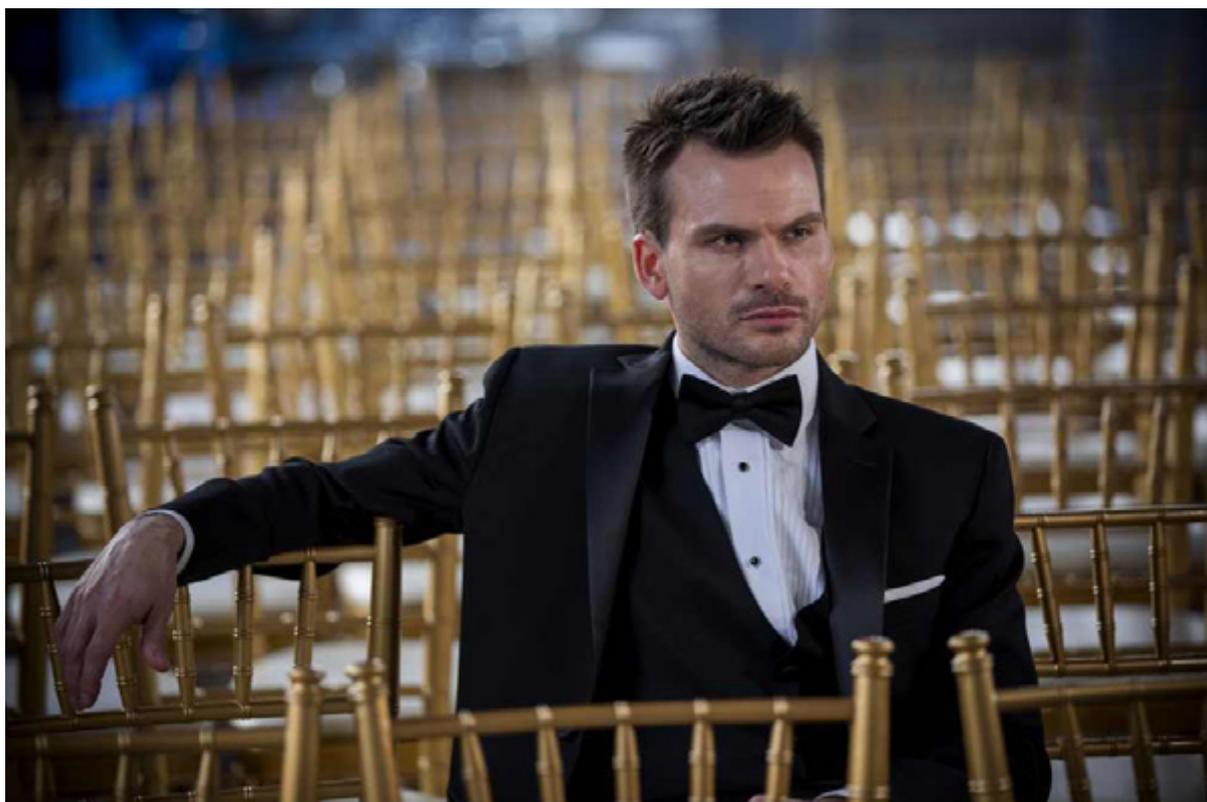
5 Stop asking questions that are only asked to give you time to do something. For example: "Name any card in the deck. Any reason that you named that card?" Does that follow-up question have anything to do with the effect? Usually the spectator just replies, "Um, because you just asked me to name a random card in the deck." After they name a random card, your next patter line should be something related to the premise of the effect. For example: "Bill, name any card in the deck. Bill, it's important to realize that this box has been on the table in full view before you named your card." Another bad version of this is to ask a question and then completely ignore their answer. A spectator may give a detailed answer why they chose the card and the performer ignores this because he's finished with the sleight he needed to do. Go off script and interact with your spectator when they contribute to the conversation.

6

Please stop asking the audience for applause. This is such a cringe worthy moment. "C'mon people I'm working hard up here." Or, after not getting any reaction, "There are two ways of doing this, with applause or the way we're doing it now." Yes, you'll get applause. But the audience will give you pity applause and then feel obligated to continue that type of applause after each trick as you continue performing. If you're not getting applause, it's the material or your performance that needs work, not the audience. Could you imagine a comedian asking his audience to please laugh after his next joke? Pro Tip: Never ever ask anything of your audience.

7

Watch out for bad posture when performing. Here's another bad habit I see in most beginner performers. They have very poor posture. They're slouched over. The audience will certainly pick up on this. Audiences like confidence and power. So, stand up straight and present to your audience. My good friend Michael Vincent is a master of this. He owns the room before he even opens his mouth by how he walks out on stage. It's a beautiful thing to watch Michael do this and it's a simple adjustment to make. Again, like the shifting your weight problem, the first step in fixing this problem is just having a greater awareness of yourself on stage.



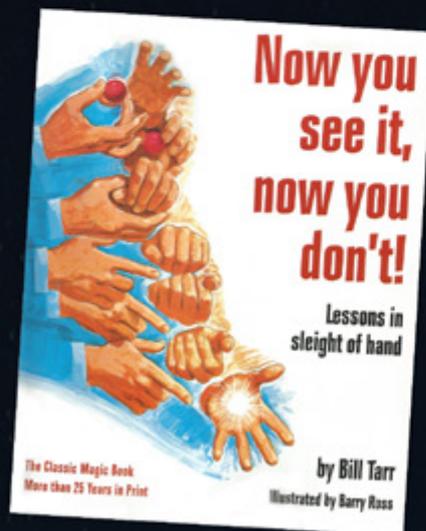
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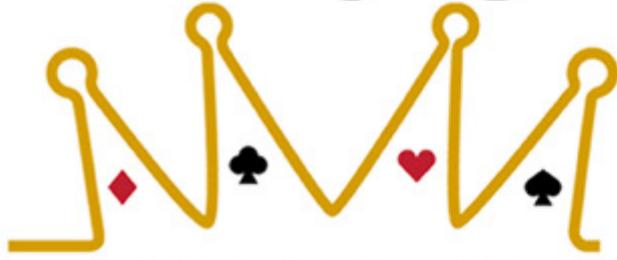
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JEFF CHRISTENSEN

MAGIC IS EDUCATION

A look at education and magic from teacher and magician Jeff Christensen. This article looks at Jeff's search for combining education and magic to make an entertaining and meaningful performance.

As a classroom teacher the first effect I performed in a classroom setting was while reading the children's book *The Garden of Abdul Gasazi* by Chris Van Allsburg. In the book the main character is a retired magician so incorporating magic seemed logical. My plan was modest and fairly simple. The goal was to make the sharing of a story become more magical. When the character of Abdul Gasazi is introduced I stopped and said "I don't know how he does it but Abdul Gasazi could create magic whenever he wanted...kind of like this." I then showed the book empty and proceeded to produce an extended rainbow streamer using a thumb tip. I would continue with: "And no one has any idea how

Abdul Gasazi did it." The response to the book and the magic was very positive. It felt like something special so I continued to try and plan various effects into other educational activities in order to enhance the response they received.

The first educational show that I developed focused on enhancing literacy instruction through magic. In planning this program I wanted the magic I performed to be something special so that the children would be more likely to associate positive feelings with reading and literacy instruction. I also wanted to help connect an experience/concrete images to some very abstract skills



Dr. Ricardo Rosenkranz, Jeff McBride, CJ May and Jeff C - all students of Jeff McBride

so that the students would have a greater likelihood to remember and use the material covered. In this column I'd like to share some of the thinking and processes that go into planning a magic show that has educational value.

I started the process by identifying curriculum and reading strategies that might go well with the magic pieces that I already performed or at least was aware of. I began this by consulting the curriculum materials for the age group that I wanted to target my show towards. If you're not in the school system I would encourage you to consult with a local educator on this area as they will be able to quickly direct you to the required documents as well as share any issues or trends. This will help you to not only plan an educational show with good content, but one that is also current and marketable.

The effect the Vanishing Bandana remains popular and in the right hands it can still be a very entertaining particularly for younger children. The effect is often structured with the fictional story that by listening to the recording the audience will learn a new trick. I think we can agree that folding a banana doesn't make sense and so after the trick is completed I would say out loud "Books are supposed to make sense...but folding a banana in half doesn't make sense... when that happens you need to stop, back up and reread the text to make sure that it makes sense." Educators will often model appropriate behaviour, learning strategies by "thinking out loud." One day the words "Unless you're reading a book



"I started the process by identifying curriculum and reading strategies that might go well with the magic pieces that I already performed or at least was aware of."



like...Captain Underpants" came out and it got a big laugh. Later I bought a copy of the book that had a 3d cover and started to tilt the cover to make the hologram come to life. The final development with this piece was to add the remote control effect Animation Sensation by Sean Bogunia. I simply added the remote control to the back of the book with some velcro which, when depressed, would activate a Captain Underpants figure to pop up in my case behind me for a really fun "look but don't see" moment. When I finally saw the animation I would grab the nearest thing I could and cover it...with what? A pair of size 100 giant underwear that I found online. The sequence provided the opportunity for me to talk about books and demonstrate some of the reading strategies in a unique and fun way.

The next piece that I added into this reading show wasn't a magic trick but rather a gag item. It utilized a clown prop known as the Snake Camera Surprise, which combines a squirt camera with some spring snakes hidden in the flash

bulb. I paired this prop with two books and a simple reading strategy. As you read or are being read to the student is encouraged to "make a picture in your head." The script for introducing the prop was (take out the camera): "To help follow the book you need to make a picture in your head. Let's practice that with this book." (Performer takes out book Clifford and the Big Storm) "Ok, let's make a picture in our head of a big, red, dog. Got it? Wow, you're doing a great job... I can see the tail sticking out of your ear!" (Points to children and encourages them for doing a good job). "And we have the storm...so imagine some clouds and so make a picture in your head of all of that..." (As this is said the performer using the squirting water feature to gently shoot water over the heads of the children in the audience.) This interaction never failed to get a great response and often children would want to get squirted again! I would then feel like witness from the camera and compliment them saying: "Wow...you've done a great job making a picture in your head!" I would then put down the camera and introduce a second book. This was one I found called Rain Forest and I smile cheekily as I said the word rain. With this book I would flip through a few of the pages

and encourage the children to look through and call out the various animals depicted in the book. I would put down the book and pick up the snake camera saying, "So make a picture in your head of the rain forest with toucans, monkeys and oh...there are those things that slither...what are they called? And as soon as the audience answered snakes I would scream "SNAKES" and release the spring snakes from the camera. This would get another huge response and again I would congratulate them on doing an amazing job using the reading strategy making a picture in your head. A couple of more squirts and I would have the snakes collected and put away along with the camera.

As I continued down this path I found another magic piece that could be scripted to encourage the use of another reading strategy. The magic piece is Kevin James' amazing trick Bowlarama. The strategy is "Does it look right? Do the words match the picture?" With this strategy the reader is encouraged to start with the picture and then going to the text to sound out the word. As they do the words that they predict can be matched with the corresponding picture. With Bowlarama you draw a picture of

a bowling ball and then actually write the words "Bowling Ball." Through this process the reading strategy could be magically demonstrated. They would then be encouraged to make a picture in their head and to sound out the words. As they did the bowling ball would drop from the picture. I would then look at the ball and congratulate them on how good they were at making a picture in their head. To end the routine I would open the pad and reveal that the words remained but the picture had magically come to life. Later in class the teacher/students could refer back to the bowling ball and say "Don't forget to make a picture in your head as you read. Remember when we did this with the bowling ball?" And so the process continued as I filled out the balance of my first reading show.

Remember magic is education!

Jeff Christensen (M. Ed.)

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The Asian Magic Revolution: The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly: The Chinese Pirates of the

ARTICLE BY THOMAS SWIECIAK

From the Author:

We magic enthusiasts, not employed regularly in the profession of mystification, often find ourselves observing the magic world from the outside. However, sometimes change is so powerful that even outsiders can feel the ground shifting.

It was roughly ten years ago that I became aware of the new and unique magic performance styles coming out of Asia. I did not anticipate that this babbling brook of illusion performances would morph into more than a raging river, but rather a new ocean. I sought to define this moment in the history of magic in some way, to somehow capture a small part of this “Asian Magic Revolution.”

What I have produced are three articles which attempt to encapsulate the major aspects of this movement. These three major aspects can be summed up as: the positivity of a cultural magic exchange across geographic hemispheres, the untapped economic and cultural potential of magic in the nation of China, and the epidemic of Chinese illusion piracy. I have tried to present as comprehensive an overview as possible in the limited space of a periodical. The article series which follows is the product of these efforts, and I do very much hope the reader enjoys *The Asian Magic Revolution: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly*.

(The translations provided in these articles have been generated by online services. Any mistranslations are both regrettable and apologized for).

Many blessings have been brought to the world of illusion by the Asian Magic Revolution. Global audiences have been treated to the creativity of performers such as Taiwanese illusionist Ding Jiangzong (丁建中), Hong Kong illusionist Louis Yan (甄澤權), and South Korean illusionist Choi Hyun-Woo (최현우). However, just as every revolution has controversial side effects, the power of the Asian Magic Revolution has detonated an explosion in magic piracy.

The global grand illusion stage prop market has been flooded with a variety of products which numerous American and European illusionists have asserted are a direct infringement of their intellectual property and performance rights. These “pirated” products sell at a fraction of the price of their American and European counterparts.¹

By far, and almost exclusively, the most egregious perpetrator of this magic piracy epidemic is the country of China. Two particular illusions, Jonathan Pendragon’s Clearly Impossible and Daniel Summers’ Compressed, will be focused on as examples of this Chinese “piracy.”

Since 2009, a plethora of Chinese grand illusion stage prop manufacturing companies have sprung up by the dozen, with many selling their products on a website known as Taobao.com.² These illusion sales have recently spread to the very popular Alibaba.com.³ Due to the rampant popularity of both the Clearly Impossible and Compressed grand illusion stage props throughout Asia, these small Chinese magic companies mass produce the two illusion props on an industrial scale.⁴ Countless pictures across the internet, and across Taobao.com, openly boast the scale of these manufacturing operations (See *fig. 1* through *fig. 3*).⁵

Chinese illusion manufacturing companies are numerous, with various names and logos.⁶ Due to the sheer number of these companies dispersed across China, this article will only identify and analyze three specific Chinese illusion manufacturing companies. The first two companies have been chosen simply due to the ease of identifiability which both companies possess in name and logo.⁷

1 George Luck, *Eliminating Piracy*, 52, MagicSeen Magazine, November 2017.

2 淘寶網 (trans. Taobao), <https://world.taobao.com/> (last visited Mar. 23, 2018).

3 Alibaba.com, Liuzhou Mofang Metal Products Co., Ltd. <https://supermagic.en.alibaba.com/productlist.html?spm=a2700.icbuShop.88.8.736917bc6mVHWq> (last visited Aug. 4, 2018).

4 淘寶網 (trans. Taobao), <https://www.world.taobao.com>, search term: “大型魔术道具立式压缩” (trans. “Large Magic Props Vertical Compression”), https://s.taobao.com/search?q=大型魔术道具立式压缩&imgfile=&js=1&stats_click=search_radio_all%3A1&initiative_id=staobaoz_20180315&ie=utf8 (last visited Mar. 23, 2018).; 淘寶網 (trans. Taobao), <https://www.world.taobao.com>, search term: “大型舞台魔术道具人体分身透明两分” (trans. “Large Stage Magic Props Human Body Transparent Two Points”), https://s.taobao.com/search?q=大型舞台魔术道具人体分身透明两分&s_from=newHeader&ssid=s5-e&search_type=item&sourceId=tb.item (last visited Mar. 23, 2018).

5 淘寶網 (trans. Taobao), <https://www.world.taobao.com>, Search terms: “大型魔术” (trans. “Large-Scale Magic”) (last visited Mar. 23, 2018).

6 大戏法魔术用品超市 (trans. Juggling Magic Supplies Supermarket), <http://i.youku.com/i/UMzIxNDE3NTcyNA==> (last visited Mar. 23, 2018).; 西南魔术 (trans. South West Magic), <http://i.youku.com/i/UMzE4MDg4MzM1Mg==> (last visited Mar. 23, 2018).; 蓝羽魔术大型道具权威 (trans. Blue Feather Magic Props Authority), <http://i.youku.com/i/UMzE1MjUyNTI=> (last visited Mar. 23, 2018).; 幻影魔术道具 (Phantom Magic Props), <http://i.youku.com/i/UNDIyODQzMTU2> (last visited Mar. 23, 2018).

7 淘寶網 (trans. Taobao), 幻影魔术 (trans. Phantom Magic), <https://hymagic.taobao.com/search.htm?search=y>, (last visited Mar. 23, 2018).; 蓝羽魔术 (trans. Blue Feather Magic), <https://lanyumagic.taobao.com/search.htm?search=y> (last visited Mar. 23, 2018).

The Ugly

The Asian Magic Revolution

THE FINAL IN A THREE PART SERIES



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

These two Chinese illusion manufacturing companies are Phantom Magic (Huànyǐng Móshù: 幻影魔术 – See fig. 4)⁸ and Blue Feather Magic (Lán Yǔ Móshù: 蓝羽魔术 – See fig. 5).⁹ Phantom Magic identifies itself by utilizing a logo with a large black spade, while Blue Feather Magic utilizes a logo featuring a bright blue feather. It should be obvious to the casual observer that the Clearly Impossible and Compressed grand illusion stage props being manufactured by both Phantom Magic and Blue Feather Magic are identical to the traditional designs of Clearly Impossible and Compressed (See fig. 6 and fig. 7 as compared to fig. 7a, 7b, and 7c).^{10 11 12 13}



Figure 4



Figure 5

8 幻影魔术 (trans. Phantom Magic), <https://hymagic.taobao.com/search.htm?search=y>, (last visited Mar. 23, 2018)
 9 蓝羽魔术 (trans. Blue Feather Magic), <https://lanyumagic.taobao.com/search.htm?search=y> (last visited Mar. 23, 2018).
 10 Figure 6 was provided via email to the author personally by Mr. Daniel Summers, TILFORD ILLUSIONS: CLEARLY IMPOSSIBLE, <http://www.tilfordillusions.com/index.php/stage-magic/clearly-impossible-detail>, <http://www.tilfordillusions.com/images/stories/virtuemart/product/clearly-impossible2.jpg> (last visited Mar. 23, 2018).
 11 蓝羽魔术 立式压缩 小号 演示大型魔术 大型道具 舞台魔术 户外魔术 夜场魔术 (trans. “Blue Feather Magic Vertical Compression Small Demonstration Large Magic Large Props Stage Magic Outdoor Magic Night Magic”), 蓝羽魔术大型道具权威 (trans. “Blue Feather Magic Props Authority”), Youku.com (Mar. 27, 2017), http://v.youku.com/v_show/id_XMjY2NjQ5ODI1Ng==.html?spm=a2hzp.8253869.0.0 (last visited on Mar. 23, 2018).
 12 幻影魔术 大型魔术 立式压缩 压缩人体 创意魔术 (trans. “Phantom Magic Large Magic Vertical Compression Human Body Creative Magic”), 幻影魔术道具 (trans. “Phantom Magic Props”), Youku.com (Sep. 7, 2016), http://v.youku.com/v_show/id_XMTcxNjk2NTM5Mg==.html?spm=a2hzp.8253869.0.0 (last visited on Mar. 23, 2018).
 13 幻影魔术 透明分身 电锯惊魂 大型魔术 (trans. “Phantom Magic Transparency Electric Chain Saw Large Magic”), 幻影魔术道具 (trans. “Phantom Magic Props”), Youku.com (Nov. 1, 2017), http://v.youku.com/v_show/id_XMTc3MTg2NjJkxNg==.html?spm=a2hzp.8244740.0.0 (last visited Mar. 23, 2018).

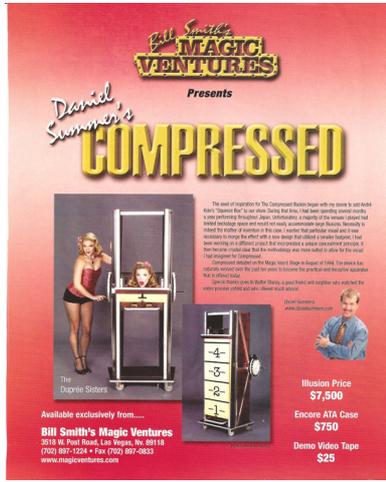


Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 7a



Figure 7b



Figure 7c

Predictably, questionable methods of business operation permeate the numerous grand illusion stage prop manufacturing companies in China. Many of these companies function without a website. Rather, these companies choose to use a Taobao.com sales page as a pseudo-website, or they post a company phone number on an illusion prop manufacturer Youku.com video page (Youku.com is a Chinese equivalent to YouTube – See *fig. 8*).¹⁴ To put this practice in perspective, imagine that the legendary illusion manufacturer Abbott Magic did not have a website, but rather chose to sell illusions exclusively on either E-Bay or via a YouTube page, and disseminated all company information through these channels. Such dubious practices certainly would allow for commercial versatility in quickly shutting down a company under one name, and opening it again under another name in the event of possible legal action.

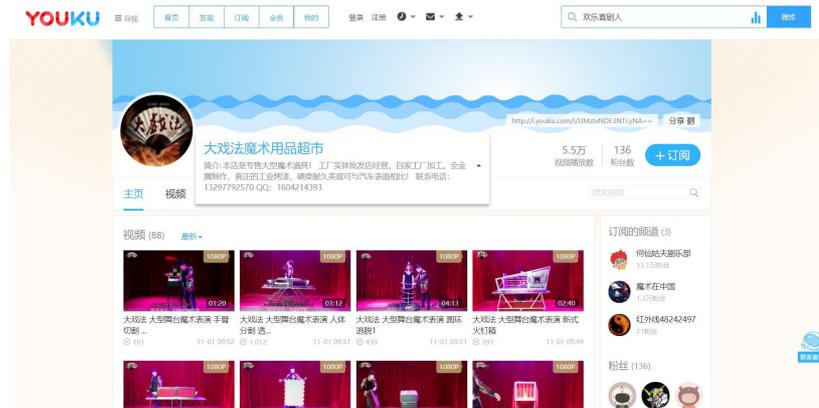


Fig. 8 – A Magic Supplier Operating Exclusively via Youku.com Video Page. Courtesy of Youku.com

Some illusion prop manufacturers simply present their company under one name, but sell illusion props under the name of a second subsidiary company. For example, a relatively new Chinese illusion company called Super Magic, identifiable by the large sword on its logo, sells its various illusion props on Alibaba.com (See *fig. 9*).¹⁵ However, the Alibaba.com company web page which sells Super Magic illusion props prominently displays the company name as “Liuzhou Mofang Metal Products Co., Ltd.” (see *fig. 10*). Furthermore, Liuzhou Mofang Metal Products Co., Ltd., according to numerous web search results, does not appear to sell any metal products which are not magic props.¹⁶ This double naming strategy is a relatively new phenomenon, leading to questions concerning whether such methods have evolved as new ways to thwart criticism or legal action.

¹⁴ 大戏法魔术用品超市 (trans. Juggling Magic Supplies Supermarket), <http://i.youku.com/i/UMzIxNDE3NTcyNA==> (last visited Mar. 23, 2018).

¹⁵ Alibaba.com, Liuzhou Mofang Metal Products Co., Ltd. <https://supermagic.en.alibaba.com/productlist.html?spm=a2700.icbuShop.88.8.736917bc6mVHWq> (last visited Aug. 4, 2018).

¹⁶ Google.com, search term: “Liuzhou Mofang Metal Products Co., Ltd.,” https://www.google.com/search?source=hp&ei=QFhIW96vENLszgK74bygBw&q=Liuzhou+Mofang+Metal+Products+Co.%2C+Ltd&oq=Liuzhou+Mofang+Metal+Products+Co.%2C+Ltd&gs_l=psy-ab.3...2211.2211.0.3082.1.1.0.0.0.0.306.306.3-1.1.0...0...1c.2.64.psy-ab.0.0.0...0.rkM5Ec0mACy



Fig. 9 – Super Magic Company Logo.

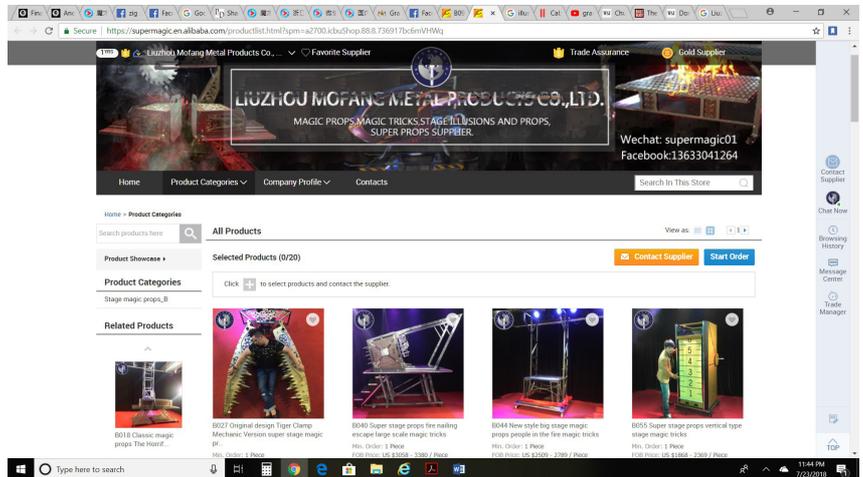


Fig. 10 – Super Magic Liuzhou Mofang Metal Products Co., Ltd. Alibaba.com Sales Page. Courtesy of Alibaba.com

One common practice shared by these companies is to use the same illusion promotional pictures and the same promotional videos amongst themselves, simply changing the company logo, which is super-imposed over the picture or video in the upper left-hand corner. It should further be noted that the Youku.com video posting dates of these promotional videos, in some cases, are the same (See fig. 11 through fig. 14, note the video posting dates in the lower right on fig. 11, fig. 12, and fig. 14).¹⁷ This strange coincidence could indicate a lack of resources, or a like-minded coordination amongst different companies. Conveniently, Liuzhou Mofang Metal Products Co., Ltd. (Super Magic), Phantom Magic, and Blue Feather Magic all use the same illusion prop advertising pictures and videos. These examples are just as concerning as those numerous Chinese illusion companies whose promotional sales video performers choose to wear masks, rather than reveal their identities (See fig. 14).¹⁸

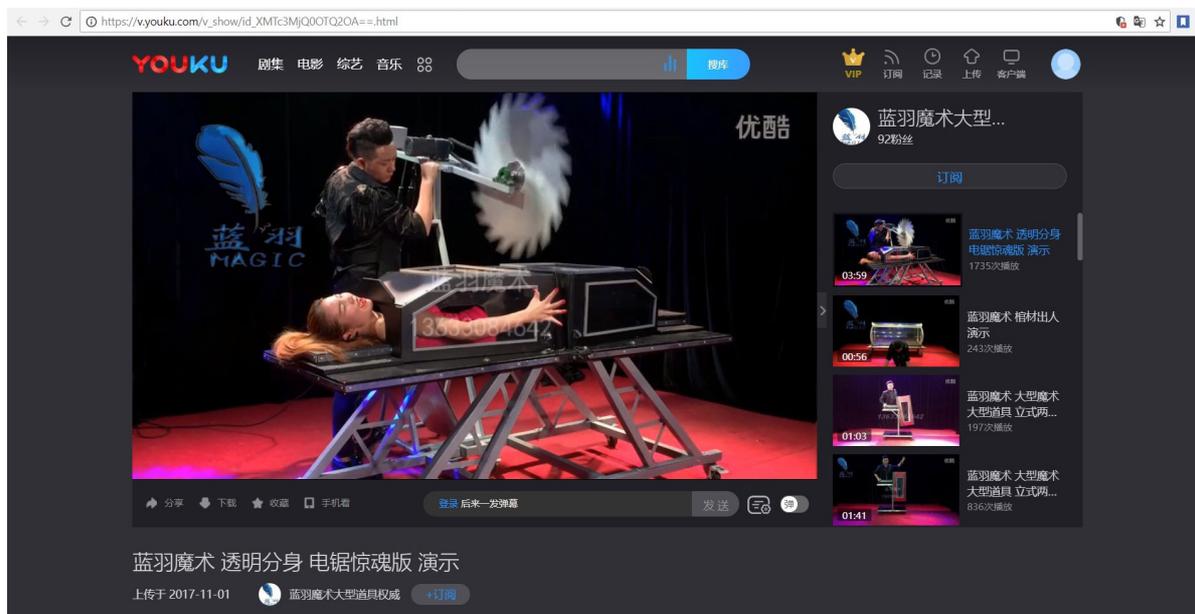


Fig. 11 – Blue Feather Magic Clearly Impossible Promotional Video posted on 2017-11-01. Courtesy of Youku.com

17. 幻影魔术透明分身电锯惊魂大型魔术 (trans. “Phantom Magic Transparency Electric Chain Saw Large Magic”) 幻影魔术道具 (trans. “Phantom Magic Props”), Youku.com (Nov. 1, 2017), https://v.youku.com/v_show/id_XMTc3MTg2NjkxNg==.html; 蓝羽魔术透明分身电锯惊魂版演示 (trans. “Blue Feather Magic Transparent Spade Chainsaw”), 蓝羽魔术大型道具权威 (trans. “Blue Feather Magic Props Authority”), Youku.com (Nov. 1, 2017), https://v.youku.com/v_show/id_XMTc3MjQ0OTQ2OA==.html; B091Classic magic props Electric Saw Body Separator stage magic, Alibaba.com, https://supermagic.en.alibaba.com/product/60765092623-806395593/B091Classic_magic_props_Electric_Saw_Body_Separator_stage_magic.html (last visited Aug. 4, 2018).

18. 大戏法大型舞台魔术表演人体分割透明两分1 (trans. “Juggling Large Scale Stage Magic Show Human Body Division Transparent Two Points 1”), 大戏法魔术用品超市 (trans. Juggling Magic Supplies Supermarket), Youku.com (Nov. 1, 2017), http://v.youku.com/v_show/id_XMTc2Mzg2MjMw-MA==.html?spm=a2h2p.8244740.0.0 (last visited Mar. 23, 2018). Note that this video was also posted the same day as the videos posted for the same illusion by Phantom Magic and Blue Feather Magic. Such a coincidence could likely comport with a planned economic model.

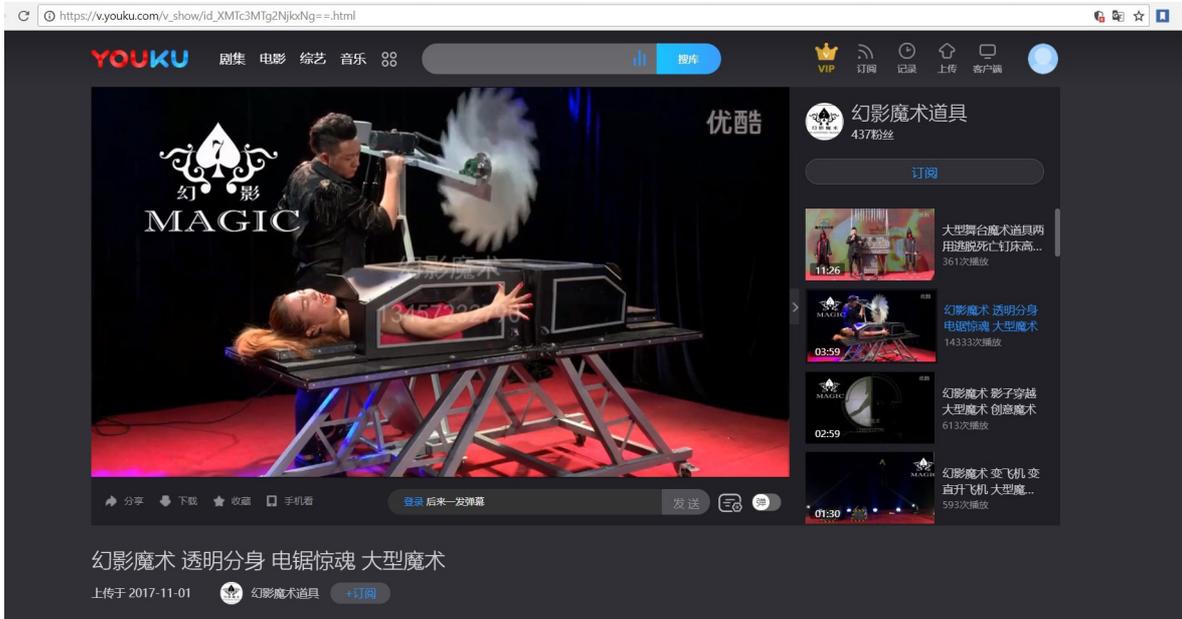


Fig. 12 – Phantom Magic Clearly Impossible Promotional Video Posted on 2017-11-01. Courtesy of Youku.com

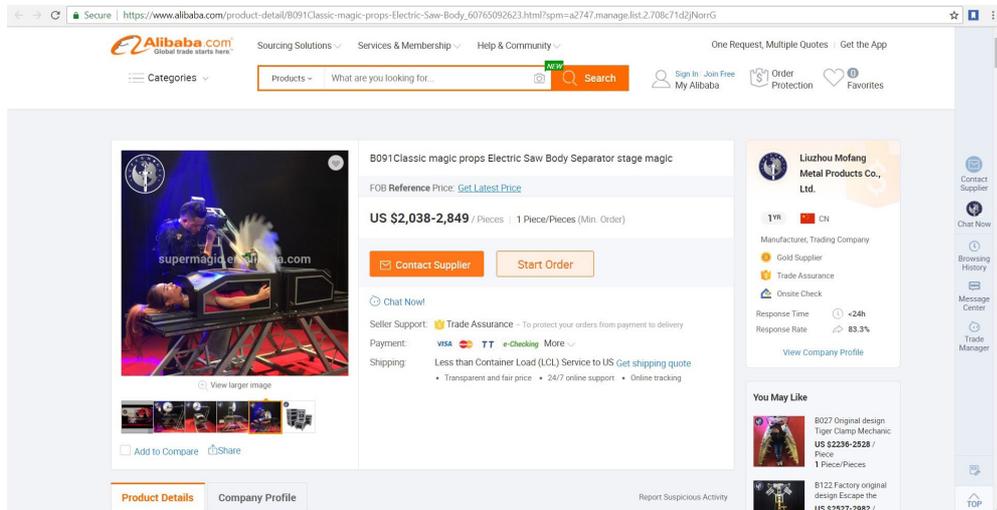


Fig. 13 – Super Magic Clearly Impossible Promotional Photo. Courtesy of Alibaba.com



Fig. 14 – Clearly Impossible Promotional Video Posted 2017-11-01. Courtesy of Youku.com

Rampant piracy of American and European-inspired illusions throughout China is openly acknowledged. The Global Times of China cites the fact that “American men of magic . . . spare no expense in their performances that often involve expensive props and costly stage effects.”¹⁹ The Global Times then approaches the subject of Chinese magic piracy with a conciliatory tone, citing a lack of funds on the part of the Chinese populace. For Chinese magicians, “budget restrictions mean they must instead rely on cheaper tricks involving inexpensive props . . . [t]he restrictions on exploring new territory also mean that many of their illusions are scaled down imitations of foreign magicians’ tricks.”²⁰ It should come as no surprise that The Global Times of China is a stridently nationalistic publication run by the Chinese government.²¹ A recent article in MagicSeen magazine noted that British magician Andi Gladwin gave “a keynote speech on piracy in magic to the Chinese government . . . and he didn’t hold back.”²² Gladwin stated that it is a cultural problem. “Some pirates that I have talked to don’t even understand that they are doing something wrong,” Gladwin said, “to them, they are offering a service for their fellow magicians.”²³

For now, the piracy epidemic shows no signs of slowing down, as the popularity of grand illusion performance has continued to increase exponentially throughout Asia as the decade has progressed. Consequently, as long as the commercial demand persists, the market for Chinese versions of grand illusions, such as Clearly Impossible and Compressed, will thrive. “My friend’s prop stores are making money all of a sudden,” Chinese citizen Jin Lei told China Today.²⁴ Giving an indicator of where the market is headed, China Today wrote that, “[o]ne 20-year-old dealer [Lei] knows closed his store about two years ago, but is planning to resume his business.”²⁵

19 Zhang Zihan, *Under No Illusions*, The Global Times, Apr. 26, 2012, <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/706869.shtml> (last visited Mar. 23, 2018).
 20 Id.
 21 Zheping Huang, *Inside the Global Times, China’s Hawkish, Belligerent State Tabloid*, Quartz, Aug. 9, 2016, <https://qz.com/745577/inside-the-global-times-chinas-hawkish-belligerent-state-tabloid/>.
 22 George Luck, *Eliminating Piracy*, 52, MagicSeen Magazine, November 2017.
 23 Id.
 24 Zhang Xueying, *China Loves Magic*.
 25 Zhang Xueying, *China Loves Magic*.

Thomas L. Swieczak is an American lawyer and lifetime magic enthusiast who holds degrees from Marquette University, the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee in the subject areas of education, English literature, film, journalism, and law. He resides in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, U.S.A

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Restaurant MAGIC 2.0

JIM SISTI

Jim Sisti has been performing magic for over 30 years and his career has taken him from local nightspots, trade shows, amusement parks and restaurants to the off-Broadway stage. Following a 12-year career as a popular Connecticut radio personality, he turned to magic full time and now, his client list boasts numerous Fortune 500 companies and even a celebrity or two, including actor Richard Dreyfuss.



Last issue, we began a discussion about the oft-debated sub-genre of professional conjuring known as restaurant magic and this month, we'll add some additional thoughts on this popular, but much maligned, venue.

The criteria I use for choosing a restaurant has always worked with a great deal of consistency for me. I've always looked for privately owned upscale restaurants (I try to avoid chain restaurants) that cater to families. I try to look for restaurants that tend to have a "wait" situation on busy nights. And, I try to single out the places that already seem to be predisposed to having entertainment. Simply perusing the entertainment section of the local newspaper can give you quite a bit of information. I draw up a list of the restaurants in the area that meet most (if not all) of my requirements and then I'm ready to get on the phone.

You'll find that the telephone is the best way to save time and qualify leads. I know there are some who advocate "cold calling;" that is, walking in without an appointment and asking to see the boss. I've never had much luck with this approach. You'll find that it's very rare that you'll be able to see the person who makes the decisions anyway. Call your prospects, get the name of the person responsible for hiring entertainment and ask to speak to him. It's a more professional approach in the long run.

In your phone pitch, tell the decision-maker who you are and what you do. Make sure to mention that what you have to offer has the potential to increase his business (only those who are planning on burning the place down for the insurance money would not be interested in this.) Your pitch should touch on the following points: 1) Emphasize that you're a pro; 2) Underscore the entertainment value of your services; 3) Stress that your services are affordable; and 4) Try to get an appointment to meet with him, making sure he understands that you will not take a lot of his time.

So, here's the good news. If you get the decision-maker to agree to see you, you will almost always get some work. This, of course, assumes that your magic and presentations are of a professional caliber. I have always gotten the gig from anyone who has agreed to let me audition. This doesn't mean that I have extraordinary skills as a magician, nor does it mean that I had a weapon with me. It simply means that if they agree to see you, the idea of having

a tableside magician is an interesting and intriguing one to them. You have what sales people call a qualified lead and the only thing that remains is for you to knock their socks off at the audition.

How much you can expect to be paid depends entirely on your market and what nights you're expected to work. It will also depend on how long you're contracted for. Obviously, if someone wanted you to work two nights a week every week, you could cut them some more slack on your fee than if they only wanted you one night every other week. The bottom line here is that if you feel you're being compensated adequately for your services, you've gotten a good deal no matter what other magicians tell you they're making (which, incidentally, you can usually divide in half!)

Once you get the job, your continued success will depend almost entirely on how well you've made good on your promise to increase business or generate publicity and customer interest. If a number of people are coming into the restaurant primarily to see you, the management would be foolhardy to let you go, especially in lean times. But, it's not always as easy as it sounds to prove to the powers that be that you are attracting people. Luckily, there are some

ways to make sure that the management knows you're a benefit.

The restaurant's comment cards are the best way for the restaurant to see that people are enjoying your work. Not all restaurants have them, but most do. When you work for a particularly responsive table, suggest that if they enjoyed the magic (and you know they did...that's the point!), would they be so kind as to let the management know? Then, simply point out the comment card or the suggestion box or whatever the system the restaurant is using to gain patron feedback.

What do you do if the restaurant has no comment card system? Simply suggest that they mention how much they enjoyed the magician to the host or hostess on the way out. This is not quite as good as knowing that the management has positive, handwritten comments in their hands, but the front-of-house person is almost certainly going to say to the manager, "I've heard a lot of good things about the magician tonight."

The numbers of different situations that you'll encounter while doing this kind of work are almost impossible to detail. You'll run across people who are intoxicated.

You'll run across tables where everyone has just come back from a funeral. You'll also get people who will object to magic on religious grounds. However, you'll also meet eager parents who wish you to entertain at their child's birthday party, corporate-types who would like you to represent their company at a trade show, business people desiring to hire you for the next company picnic or Christmas party...and everybody in between. It's like being paid to showcase for potential clients and more lucrative shows.

I've been a restaurant performer now for more than 30 years and though my career has taken me to a lot of different venues, from amusement parks to comedy clubs to night clubs to off-Broadway theaters, none of it quite compares to the feeling I still get when I walk up to a table of returning patrons and they say, "We were hoping you were here tonight!"

Good luck in your restaurant magic endeavors!



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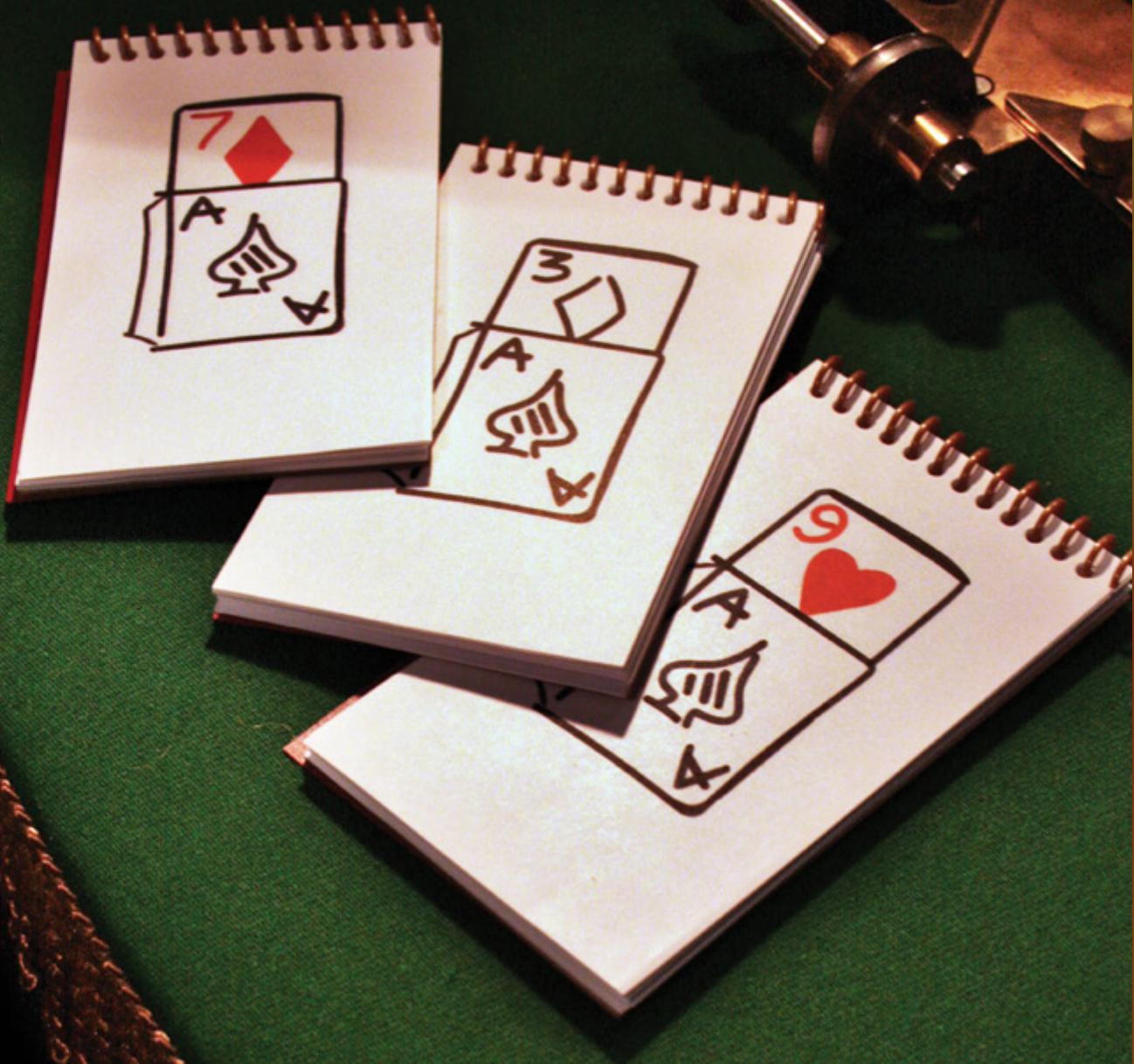
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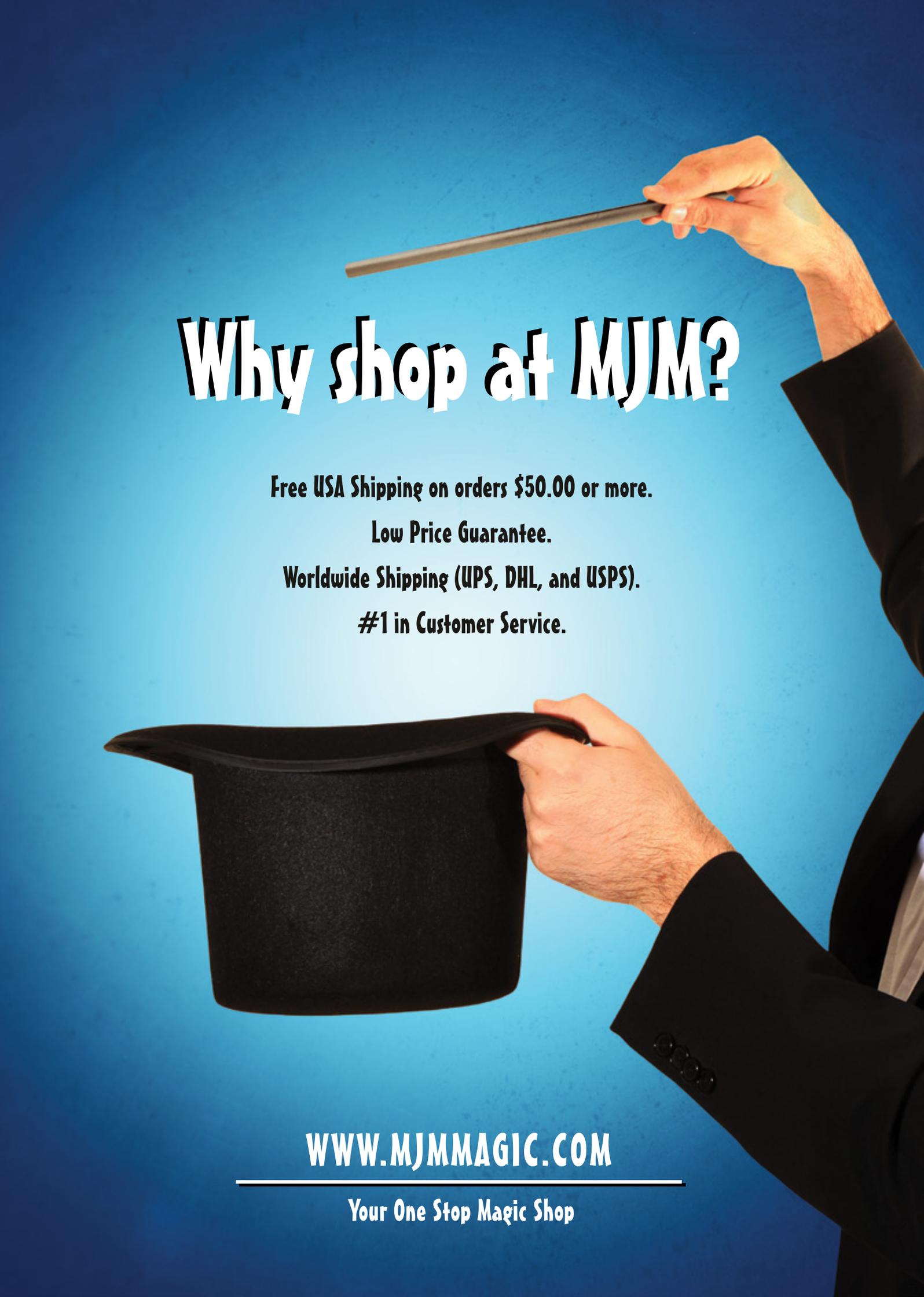


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If you did not have the opportunity to see the Denny & Lee Magic Shop pictorial in the incredible Anastasia Synn Vanish Magazine Cover - issue number 50 ... please do so as soon as possible, I believe you will find it fascinating to say the least.

That article kicked off an idea in our heads ... Pauls and mine ... currently I am on the road - not sure exactly where I'm headed, however, I hope to find/discover and stop at any number of Brick and Mortar Magic shops along my journey.

Hopefully the proprietor, once I introduce myself, will allow me to take some photos, ask some questions and let us put a pictorial based article in VANISH. The questions will be similar for all future stores so you can get a quick over view.

I met Vince DeAngelis at the MAES convention in Cherry Hill, NJ in 2015. He had a nice set-up in the dealer room with wonderful books for sale, I was blown away to find a copy of Alan Wakeling's volume - soft cover - for an amazing price - (I'd recently sold my hard cover) ... yes ... I bought it.

Jump forward to Oct 2018 - I'm hanging out in western Mass and decided to seek out Diamonds Magic - I'd purchased a few things from there while living in Maine. So I plugged in the GPS and headed from my location.

The store was easy to find and the signage in the parking lot let me know I arrived. As I entered the second floor shop Vince greeted me warmly and asked if I'd ever been to Diamonds. I said, "no, but we met at the MAES - I'm Dameon" ... he had instant recognition and we sat around talking for quite a while until some customers arrived.



1 How Long Have You Been a Brick and Mortar Shop and at this location?

DM: We've been at this location for 23 years.

2 What is the Shops History?

DM: Diamonds Magic was originally Paul Diamonds from Ft. Lauderdale Florida. Purchased by Eddie (?) who moved it to Peabody, Mass where it resides today.

Side note: I knew Paul Diamond, having met him while performing in Miami Beach in the early 80's. He saw the show, came backstage to introduce himself, then invite me to his store - his shop was terrific. Paul was a true gem, a wonderful entertainer with a larger than life personality. I was saddened to hear Paul passed away this year.





3

How long have you been “in” magic and do you perform or have you performed professionally on stage/Parlor/tradeshows/corporate/CU/Childrens shows?

DM: I've been performing magic since the age of nine(9). I entertained at children's birthdays and cub scouts, and even on the Willie Whistle Show when I was a teen through my twenties.

4

What is your specialty?

DM: I would have to say close-up and children's shows

5

Is Everything in the Shop for sale?

DM: No some are donated and just for display such as the LeGrande David Costumes displayed around the room

6

What Do You Offer to The Magic Community - outside of selling Effects?

DM: We offer a wide range of things including: lessons in sleight of hand, performance techniques, stage presentations, lectures, birthday parties, special events, and shows other than magic on our stage,

7

Who have you had lecture at Diamonds?

DM: McBride, Ogawa, Houchin, Roth, Lorayne, Shin Lim, Eason, Gertner, Earle, Asi Wind, Dynamo, Jon Armstrong, Eric Jones, Sankey, Daryl, Henry Evans, David Stone, Pandrea, Adam Wilber, Tyler Twombly, Jason Ladanye, Tango, Karl Hein, Marcus Eddie, Rafael Benetar, Cesareal, Kranzo

And folks are always stopping in out of the blue ... you never know who is going to be there.

8

Who do you have on the upcoming lecture Calendar? (next 6 months)

9

What is Diamonds Magic Known for?

DM: Friendly and personal service. We are a hub of magic in New England

Side note: I watched Vince demo some items for a few customers. He is very knowledgeable, has a wonderful presentation and understanding of the effects he is selling. And best of all is his incredibly friendly personality

10

What is your favorite current marketed item?

DM: I would have to say that the 52 to 1 deck by Wayne Fox and

David Penn from the UK is my absolute favorite at the moment.

Side note: Killer effect.

A little extra:
The following week there was a lecture by Ed Sumner from England, he was in town for a friends wedding and Diamonds Magic was lucky enough to have him present his “Jumping Off Points - Designing Incredible Magic & Connecting With Your Audience” presentation. I went

Ed is a wonderful profession magician from the UK with a down to earth approach to his magic and way of thinking.



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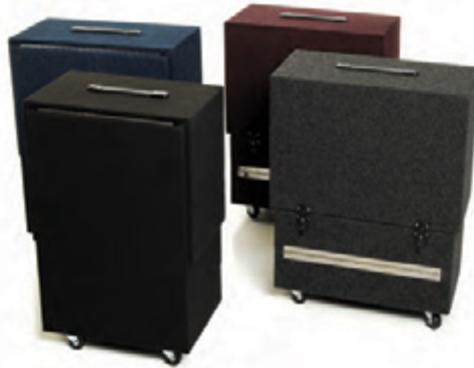
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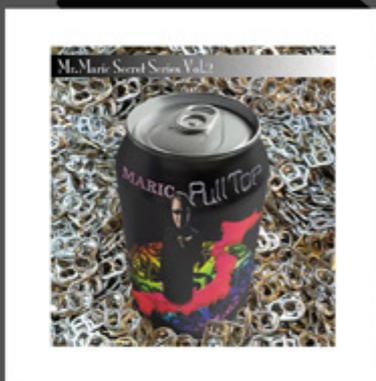
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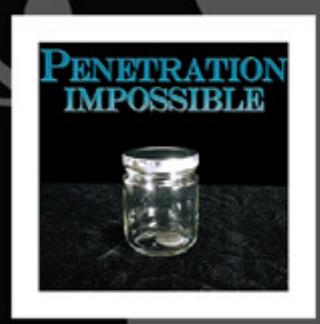
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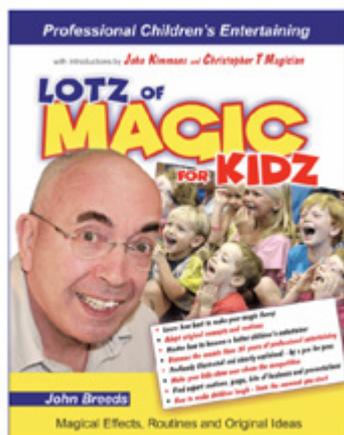
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1 LOTZ OF MAGIC FOR KIDZ BY JOHN BREEDS



AVAILABLE: www.Johnbreeds.com

A MUST have book for ANY person interested in children's magic! Especially for those that are looking for fresh content and upping their game. We at Stevens Magic are very excited to offer this book to our customers.

Learn how best to make your magic funny. Adopt original concepts and routines. Master how to become a better children's entertainer

How to make children laugh from the moment you start.

Learning how best to make your magic funny.

Adopt original concepts and routines.

Master how to become a better children's entertainer.

Discover the secrets from John's 35-years of professional entertaining.

Profusely illustrated and clearly explained by a Pro for Pro's.

Make your kid show soar above the competition.

Enclosed within expert routines, props and presentations.

Discover the secrets from 35 years of professional entertaining

Profusely illustrated and clearly explained – by a pro for pros:

John Breeds' previous book, the best-selling, *How To Create Kids' Magic* is still acknowledged as the best book of its kind. David Kaye described this publication as "...the A to Z of all aspects of being a professional children's entertainer". It embraced the business of earning a good living as a children's magical entertainer.

Now, continuing in a similar style, John Breeds treats you to dozens of routines from his working repertoire. His full explanations, attention to the smallest detail and his crystal clear illustrations show you how someone with 35 years performing experience brings his material to life.

Remember, John Breeds is the proven creator who brought the world's magicians: Visible Magic Painting, Wacky Washing Machine, Pro-Epic, the funny Lie-Detector and hands-free electronic gizmos. This new book for professional entertainers brims with creative, funny and mystifying magic that will rejuvenate your shows with fresh material.

MY THOUGHTS:

I remember growing up in magic when everything on the market was geared toward kids performers. Those days are long gone, yet the kids market and kids entertainers are still the busiest and hardest working magicians out there. The books that I grew up are very dated and recently a small handful of great books for kids entertainers has come on the market. I would consider this to be one of them. With over 200 pages this is jam packed with original material for today's kids. It comes with two introductions by two of my favorite family entertainers, John Kimmons and Christopher T. Magician.

The routines in here are varied but my eye was immediately drawn to a Metal Epic routine called Pro Epic. This is a real novel approach to Metal Epic and big enough to be seen in large venues. He has taken one of the main flaws of Mental Epic and fixed it, which I talked about in *Mental Epic Compendium*, a book I wrote on the subject. This is not just a great kids trick but can be used for adults as well. This has to be one of my favorites.

This book is filled with effects that range in age from very young to teens and there are lot of DIY tricks in here. So, if you enjoy making props you will find a lot of great things to build in here.

From reading the material I can see John has a real sense of what today's children want to see in entertainment. It needs to be quick and moving, not slow and long winded like the good old days. He has all the right elements in here to keep the amazed and entertained.

There are a few electronic routines in here such as Lie Detector Jr. and his Buzzer opener. The Great Escape is a terrific escape routine for kids, and his handling on The Breakaway Wand is definitely worth reading. The book also contains some very funny gags such as 'popping your ear' using something we all own. These little one off gags you can throw in at any time and not only do the kids laugh but the parents will find it funny too. If you just filled your show with the 'gags' in here you'd be adding some great additions to your act.

As well as great tricks there is great advice. I like the way John says that many entertainers measure the success of a kids show by how loud kids can shout - which doesn't prove anything. The truth is that it's the look on their faces when you amaze them with the magic and give them the gift of laughter. The old school type of entertaining kids is lazy and fails to understand the psychology of the child in an audience at a fun magic show. John really has found the secret to great magic and entertainment for kids, and now he is sharing it with all of us.

Take time to sit down and read this entire book. Choose one of two effects that really appeal, that's the hard part because they are all so good, and work on adding those. Don't just read the tricks but really study what John talks about. With people like John entertaining magic for kids won't be looked down upon. As John says there are some real hacks out there but I hope every single kids entertainer buys this book and studies it.

This really is a lifetime of magic in one book. John has put together all of his tricks he used professionally for many years, and they are as fresh now as they were when he created them.

SIDE NOTE: John is the inventor (in 1966) of quite possibly the most used kids magic trick in the world - VISIBLE MAGIC PRINTING.



2 GECKO PRO BY ROSENBAUM



PRICE: \$66.00

AVAILABLE: All magic dealers

WHOLESALE: www.murphysmagic.com

Take your Vanishes to the next level!

The Gecko Pro System (GPS) combines the ORIGINAL GECKO SYSTEM with the GECKO EXTREME SYSTEM!

GPS allows you to safely vanish, switch or transform almost ANY borrowed item VISUALLY AND SILENTLY!! It is an easy-to-use, lightweight and unobtrusive magic device that you will carry with you at all times.

A quick and easy hook up and, once customized (which only takes moments), you can comfortably carry it with you and use it wherever and whenever you desire. You can even perform amazing vanishes in short sleeves!

With an almost instant reset, GPS is perfect for walk around, close-up, parlor, and street magic. It is so easy to use that it is appropriate for all skill levels from beginner to expert, and is a must-have item for every performer.

Countless hours of research and development have gone into the GPS to ensure you receive a high-quality, professional apparatus.

GPS provides you with thousands of possibilities, such as:

Vanishes!

Bending!

T&R (Torn and Restored)!

Transformations!

Switching!

Use as a hold-out device too!

Instant reset!

Perform within minutes of opening!

MY THOUGHTS

As somebody who owns and uses the original Gecko I have to tell you that the PRO version offer so much more. It really is something you don't want to leave home without. Now, with Gecko Pro you can really vanish almost anything PLUS with the updated gimmick you can vanish or switch bills - so it's NOT JUST for magicians. You get the same props as the original with the new additions - these are what really takes it to that next level. One of the things I love about this is that it is super easy to hook up and can be used in formal wear to street clothes. For those that are in the 'know' then you'll understand that you need some kind of jacket or hoodie, de-

pending on your performing environment. They have really given this a lot of thought and I had this one working in my regular clothes within 15 minutes. It is also super fun to practice with - the ONLY problem you will have is making sure you don't over use it - in other words you'll be tempted to vanish everything.

I think one of main features of this PRO version is the ability to switch or transform - so imagine you had a shell coin and instantly turned an English Copper coin in to a silver half dollar for example and left completely clean. It's just ONE of the many ideas shared on the download. The props are all made of the highest quality, the gimmick is made from hard plastic, and the other material is all well made and put together. I love the addition of the arm band supplied - this means you no longer have to wear a belt - if you are familiar with the original you will understand. Obviously if you are wearing a tuxedo you don't want to wear a belt, so this allows you to perform this anywhere.

The reset is literary seconds and they even include something special to help hold everything in place until needed.

Another great idea on here is the ability to bend a coin and very cleanly show a regular coin, place it in the spectator's palm and have it bend - again you are left completely clean with nothing to hide and your hands are shown empty. This is just one of many ideas shared.

As far as torn and restored goes imagine you tear up a card and wave your hand over and BAM - it's restored - again you are left clean.

The upgrade to this is well worth the price and if you own Gecko you will definitely want to get the PRO version for the many new features it offers. I've replaced my original with this one - btw you receive the original 'gimmick' PLUS the updated so you can use which ever you want. An amazing tool that will allow you to do some truly clean and impossible magic without sleights.



3 GLANCE BY STEVE THOMPSON



PRICE: 1 Magazine - \$39.99

2 Magazines - \$49.99

AVAILABLE: All magic dealers

WHOLESALE: www.murphysmagic.com

You present the current issues of two popular magazines and allow a spectator to examine both of them and choose one. You turn away and instruct her to open her magazine to any page and think of any word. "But let's find a good word," you say, "Make it a difficult word." She thinks of any word, on any page. It could be

buried in an ad or a word from a picture caption. It's all fair game. Once she has a word in her mind, she closes the magazine and you turn around. You look her in the eyes and tell her what word she is thinking of. Glance is the ingenious creation of Ireland's Steve Thompson. In collaboration with Vanishing Inc. and designed by Andi Gladwin, Glance brings you an entirely prepared contemporary news magazine. Wrap it with any current magazine cover and you will have one of the most potent weapons available to the performing mentalist: an ordinary object that allows you to do extraordinary things.

MY THOUGHTS:

I'm a huge fan of book tests and the most popular being The Mother of All Book Tests by Ted Karmilovich. This version uses some of Ted's work - with his permission and really is super easy to perform. What makes this different than a regular book test is the fact it's done using a magazine. I highly recommend getting the two magazine test which allows you to have a spectator choose any magazine. The magazines themselves are very generic and look like any business style magazine you might buy. There is no date or price on the cover so you don't have to worry about them being out of date. If you maintain the look of the magazine you could easily say you picked these up earlier and they are the latest copies. Another idea is to take the covers off these magazine and replace them with current editions of Time or other well known magazines. They do come in a cardboard envelope which will help with the travel and protecting these.

This is a very easy book test to do and something that packs flat and plays big. I really love the quality of magazine and there is something built in to the magazines so you don't have to memorise anything. The other nice thing is that they can read the magazine and not really find anything out of the ordinary.

There are also some other presentations such as a tossed out magazine test for stage. This is a great idea where you can hand out a magazine (or both) and have people look at any 'long' word then tell them which words they are thinking of.

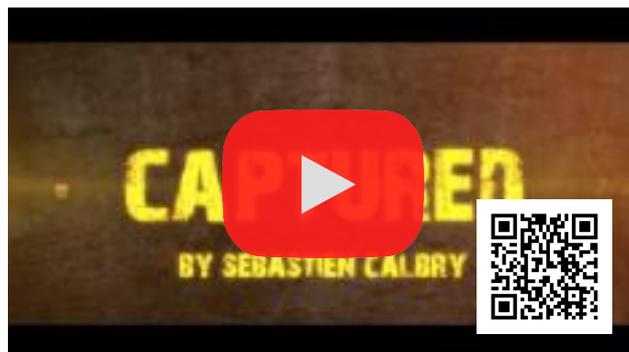
I like to look at book or magazine tests as tools that enable larger and more entertaining routines - these magazines certainly are great tools and allow for some really great routines.

Steven Thomsson has added a really great addition to Ted's original idea - which by the way he gave permission for Steve to use - it's a clever idea where you instantly know the word they are thinking of by doing something 'small' prior to the book test. It really makes it so easy and everything can be done out of your hands.

If you love any type of book test then you will love this magazine test.



4 CAPTURED BY SEBASTIEN CALBRY



PRICE: \$34.95
 AVAILABLE: All magic dealers
 WHOLESALE: www.murphysmagic.com

A card picked by an audience member, signed or not, is folded and printed on a card. It simply takes a "magic gesture" to visually extract it; a really mind-blowing effect that your audience will definitely not expect.

Along with this magic trick, Sebastien Calbry also offers a simplified version that will have you master your gimmick.

Also, you will be offered several methods and productions, all in line with your comfort level.

- READY TO PERFORM
- EASY TO DO
- VISUAL
- FLASH
- ROUTINE FOR BEGINNERS
- ROUTINE FOR PROFESSIONALS

MY THOUGHTS:

This is a rather unusual effect where a chosen card is folded and ends up printed on the face of a card, which then visually comes OFF the card and becomes the original card. It definitely is an usual and very different type of card effect. The visual effect from the folded card picture to real card is very visual and instant. There are lots of ways to present this and on the download tutorial (which btw is all taught without any talking) you will learn a version for the novice and a version for the professional. This can fit in to your regular deck of cards and be performed at any time. The gimmick card supplied is extremely well made and should it break you get something extra to make them. You will learn all this on the download. If you are looking for something a little unusual this is a good choice. The card can be signed and ended up being the card produced.

You will learn how to fold a card using Sebastien's technique which is extremely quick and well worth learning. He also does a great job in his tutorial teaching the handling and variations.



5 SNAP BY JORDAN O'GRADY



PRICE: \$28.00

AVAILABLE: All magic dealers

WHOLESALE: www.murphysmagic.com

SNAP is a perfect addition to the Modern Practical Joke Range by Jordan O'Grady.

It's a gimmicked deck of cards. When your spectator cuts the cards, they explode with a loud BANG, surprising your spectator and audience! Use the SNAPdeck in conjunction with your existing card routines to create a comical kicker ending that will make your audiences jump.

Even as a standalone deck, SNAP can be used for many routines before unleashing the surprise within.

SNAP can be altered easily to be disguised into any Poker Sized deck, so you can use your favorite fashion deck with this routine and no one will be the wiser.

SNAP will definitely create a spark in your repertoire! Please note that caps are not provided with this effect -- you will need to buy 8 shot ring caps.

Disclaimer

SNAP is sold as a novelty. Picking someone who you think would enjoy this makes sense.

We hold no responsibility for any damages or injuries caused by the use of this item. Your use of it means you understand and agree.

So that you can use it safely, we recommend you use it on yourself several times, so you get the feel for how it works.

We will do our best to answer any questions about the proper use of this, so feel free to get in touch.

MY THOUGHTS:

As you can see from the promo video this is a 'snap' effect where by the spectator cuts the deck and it fires a shot ring cap making a 'bang' and certainly startling the spectator. I've had so much fun with this but mostly on magicians simply because I feel my audiences in the corporate close-up field wouldn't appreciate this too much. This gimmick is extremely well made and will last a very long time. The only thing you need to do is to replace the

caps after each performance but these are available at every dollar or pound store around the world. I've had more fun with this in a group of magicians who want to show each other card tricks - this pretty much puts a stop to that. You can use this anytime as it can be set in a box ready to go at anytime. For me it's more of a gag than anything - and if you like scaring the "#@\$%" out of people this will do it. As I said, if you perform this chances are nobody will want to watch another card trick - which could be a positive thing. While I've had a lot of fun with this my only advice is to know your audience and choose wisely on who you perform it on. You don't want to appear to be the smartarse magician when performing at a high-end-function however in a bar with friends or with magicians this would prove to be a hit.



6 XBRIX BY MR PEARL



PRICE: \$35.00

AVAILABLE: All magic dealers

WHOLESALE: www.murphysmagic.com

Mr. Pearl's newest release - BRIX!

A great prediction effect with Lego figures, for kids and adults!

The spectator freely shuffles, freely folds, but the prediction holds!

Unique, unsuspecting, and the surprising finale is sure to make your spectator's jaw drop!

"A trick that allows you to truly understand how beautiful reinterpreting a classic is!"

- Charming Choi

"I am always impressed by Mr. Pearl's approach of classics. I purchased two sets for myself at FISM 2018, but one of my magician friends wanted it so badly, so I gave it to him. You must buy it if you are looking for a cute, wonderful and attractive trick!"

- Yuki Tomo

"This is a wonderful trick. Not only uses a very clever principle

(one of my favourites). It's very commercial, funny, and easy to do. I love BRIX!"

- Woody Aragon

Includes:

- Lego figure - 1 of 2 types (pirate or princess sent randomly)
- Card packet

MY THOUGHTS:

This is a great example of taking something classical in method and updating it to something very commercial. The spectator gets to mix up some 'lego' cards until they finally arrive at three - and when piece together they make up a crazy little lego character. The prediction is turned over and it matches PLUS there is a cute kicker where the picture becomes a real Lego piece that also matches. This is a very cute little trick that kids would love and even fool adults. Lego has always been popular and now you can add some Lego to your close-up act. This would be perfect for restaurant magicians where you have a table and need to entertain kids 7 and up. You receive the necessary gimmicks including the cards and one of either two different Lego predictions. It's easy to do and comes with a download tutorial.

WHO: Close-up workers who do a lot of kids magic or restaurants

WHERE: Perfect for a restaurant or anytime you need to entertain kids close-up

LEVEL: Quite easy to do - almost self-working.



7 FIZZ MASTER BY ERIC MEAD & PAUL HARRIS



REVIEWED BY NICK LEWIN

Cost 10 Dollars.

Video Download "From The Vault" Series.

Length 16 Minutes.

Available from Murphy's Magic.

The ultimate gimmick-free miracle for close-up and stage!

Two completely ordinary, unopened cans of carbonated beverage are honestly displayed. A spectator freely selects one of the two cans and rigorously shakes it up... then sets it down two feet from the unshaken can.

There is no doubt they have created a volatile fizz bomb with the shaken can.

You now use your magic to transfer the 10,000 tiny pressurized bubbles from the shaken can to the untouched can.

You hold the shaken and armed can, grenade up, to your face and pull the trigger... and nothing -- it's a dud. The 10,000 tiny little bubbles are gone!

You now pick up the unshaken drink, pop the top... and the canned volcano erupts in a spectacular spurt of foam and froth!

This underground gimmick-free miracle is expertly taught to you in detail by master magician, Wayne Houchin.

BONUS

Although this effect is the perfect backyard BBQ and out-with-your-friends miracle, purchasers of this download will also receive Wayne Houchin's hilarious full stage Fizz Master routine!

NICK'S THOUGHTS:

Fizz Master. This is a nicely put together video detailing a fun little stunt where the magician apparently transfers the "Fizz" from one unprepared can of soft drink into another. Yes the magician uses his powers to transfer 10,000 tiny pressurized bubbles from a well-shaken can to an untouched can. The plot is a strange little concept that works much better in performance than it reads on paper. I was aware of this effect, but hadn't seen it performed until a couple of years ago when I saw Fielding West use it onstage when we performed in a small theatre. The effect was surprisingly strong and played very well even with our sophisticated audience.

In addition to a thorough explanation of the effect the download includes a nice bonus by including good live performance footage of Wayne Houchin's hilarious stage "Fizz Master" routine. One thing I have learned over the years is that it is nice to have an impromptu stage routine available that just needs objects as easily available as two cans of Coca Cola. The information on this little download may be invaluable at some time when your props don't arrive or you just need to stretch your show a little. It would certainly kill at a tailgate party or picnic where the performer can just grab a couple of soda cans from the cooler.



8 OUT OF THE BLUE BY JAMES ANTHONY



Out Of The Blue is a fiendish effect. It features an instant vanish and an impossible location reveal that brings TV-style reactions to your everyday audience.

Effect: The magician shows a deck of Bicycle cards - half are red, and half are blue. After showing the blue cards, one spectator holds onto these blue cards. A second spectator fairly selects a card from the remaining red cards. Their card INSTANTLY... and we mean INSTANTLY... VANISHES from the red deck! The first spectator then spreads through the blue cards that the magician has never touched, to find ONE red backed card FACE DOWN. They turn it over to reveal it is the SELECTED CARD!

Created by James Anthony. Not only is Out Of The Blue simple to perform and almost self-working, it is a routine you could instantly add to your professional repertoire.

Easy to perform

Quick reset

Specially printed Bicycle gaffs

Multiple effects

Bring TV-style magic to your audience

MY THOUGHTS:

This is a really great premise and a super strong effect. The idea of having a special deck for one trick never made sense to me, however this premise makes so much sense for having extra cards that make up a deck. In this trick you show half a deck of blue back cards and half a deck of red back cards. The idea of telling them that you have left over cards from various tricks makes a lot of sense. I've performed this now under quite a few different conditions from stand-up in a group of people to close-up sitting on a floor. The reaction is super strong and has that wow factor. It's very easy to do and the online instructions do a great job teaching this. The plot is very easy for the spectators to follow, a card is FREELY chosen from a pile and it vanishes and ends up in the other pile held by a spectator - with a different coloured back. The method is extremely clever and comes with the gimmick deck and a really great travel case.

This is one of those rare moments where I would actually carry around a full gimmick deck just for one trick - it's THAT strong.

WHO: any performer with minimal card skills can do this

WHERE: Close-up such as strolling, restaurant, bars etc. You can do this in the hand or on a table



9 MAGICIANS INSURANCE CARD BY VINNY SAGOO



PRICE: \$19.00

AVAILABLE: All magic dealers

WHOLESALE: www.murphysmagic.com

A great twist on an old classic... but this time you DON'T even need a pack of cards!

A spectator is asked to think of any card in a deck and then proceed with a few easy calculations. The magician gets the card wrong a couple of times, brings out the Magicians Insurance Card and tells a few silly gags, before naming the spectator's thought-of card!

Easy to do

Fully examinable

Full routine included

Made from quality PVC card

No playing cards required

Packs small, plays BIG

BONUS - If you want to perform this effect the old-fashioned way, just force any card, and then use the Magicians Insurance Card for the gags and reveal.

MY THOUGHTS:

This is based on an old mathematical idea used by Blackstone.

This updated version is cute as you carry around an insurance card with a few gags on it. Using the original method you are able to tell a person what card they were thinking of. I'm not a huge fan of mathematical tricks where the spectator has to add and multiply numbers and so I wouldn't be using this myself. If this is your kind of thing then you probably will use it. You can carry this around with you in your wallet and perform it at any time which is a nice idea. The card is plastic and a very high quality. If you like math magic then this might be your cup of tea.



10 LIFE MAGIC - IDEAS AND MYSTERIES BY LAWRENCE HASS, PH.D



REVIEW BY Jeff Christensen

PRICE: \$19.95

LIFE MAGIC – Ideas and Mysteries
2018 Theory and Art of Magic Press
by Lawrence Hass, Ph. D.

There are many magic books filled with trick after trick and fortunately this is not another one of them. This small tome is a different kind of magic book and was written by Dr. Lawrence Hass and published through his Theory and the Art of Magic Press. As you may be aware, nearly one year ago Dr. Hass was selected to become the Dean of the McBride Magic and Mystery School after the passing of magic legend Eugene Burger. This book examines Dr. Hass' collected thoughts on the magic of life and how to use your own power to live like a magician. Like I said... clearly not another book about just tricks.

When one first looks at the book you can't help but notice the quotes and words of support on the back cover from Lance Burton, Jeff McBride, Teller and Juan Tamariz. Each these magic legends ring the praises of the Dr. Hass and what they see as his ability to raise the intellectual level of the art of magic. I would concur with them that every magician would benefit from reading this book.

So if the book isn't about tricks then what is it about? The book is 53 pages and consists of three chapters. The first chapter is entitled "Life Magic" and is the word for word address that Professor Hass gave to the graduating class of Muhlenberg College in May 2008. In this fine institution the students selected Dr. Hass to give them their "last lecture" before heading out into the world. As a fellow educator I can agree wholeheartedly with Dr. Hass when he notes that this is "...the deepest honor a teacher can receive." In this address Dr. Hass speaks from the heart as he shares his experiences and the secrets he's learned about how create a life that allows one to follow their passion whether it be magic or anything else. I won't give away all of this section but suffice to say Dr. Hass gives you the inspiration

and some very practical steps for finding a way to get paid for playing which philosopher Alan Watt's considered the "art of living."

The next section of the book is the only trick in the book and is called The Friendship Game. The piece is carefully layered effect built on the principle of the Double Deal Force. Dr. Hass was inspired to work on this piece and first came to study it after seeing it on Johnny Thompson's 1999 DVD Magic Made Easy (L&L Publishing). Dr. Hass provides his complete professional script for this effect as well as detailed handling and techniques which takes this principle to another level. There's tons of work on the subtleties, psychology and construction of this effect which can be done with a borrowed deck. In this writing Dr. Hass tips his work on Equivoque and this is very nice work indeed. Another nice feature of The Friendship Game is that its done using two spectators who do all of the card handling.

In the final chapter Dr. Hass shares a longer essay that examines some of the philosophical questions about the place of magic in life. This article is entitled "The World of Many Magics" which was originally a scholarly essay for an academic book. In this edition Dr. Hass has edited the piece back into what he calls "A readable yet sustained essay for general readers." After reading this section I was struck with the great potential for our beloved art to be something that touches our audiences in ways we couldn't even imagine. Given all of this I highly recommend that you pick of this thoughtful book which is available at:

<https://www.theoryandartofmagic.com>

Jeff Christensen
MagicalEducator.com

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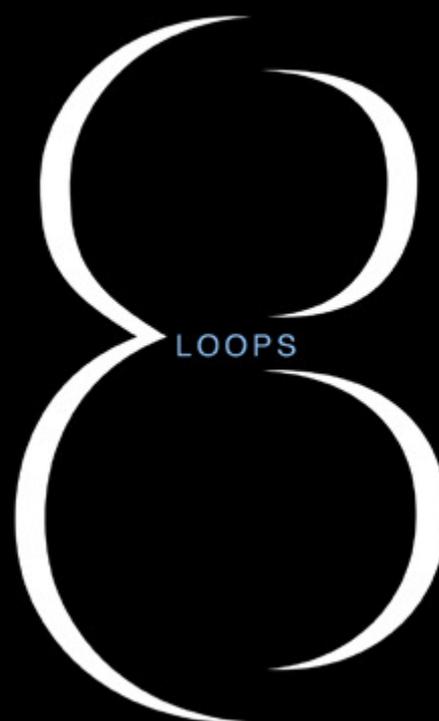
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Yigal Mesika

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